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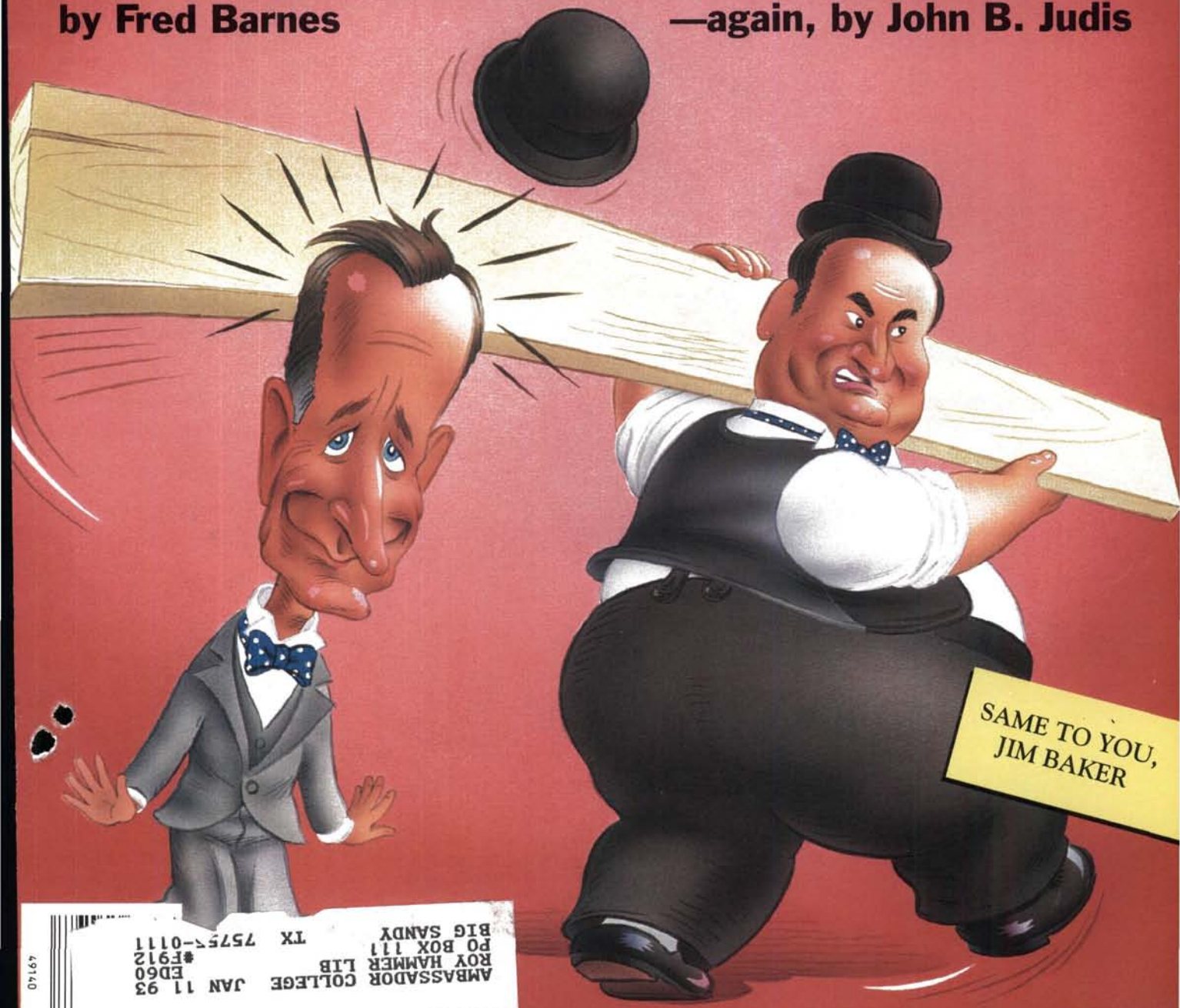

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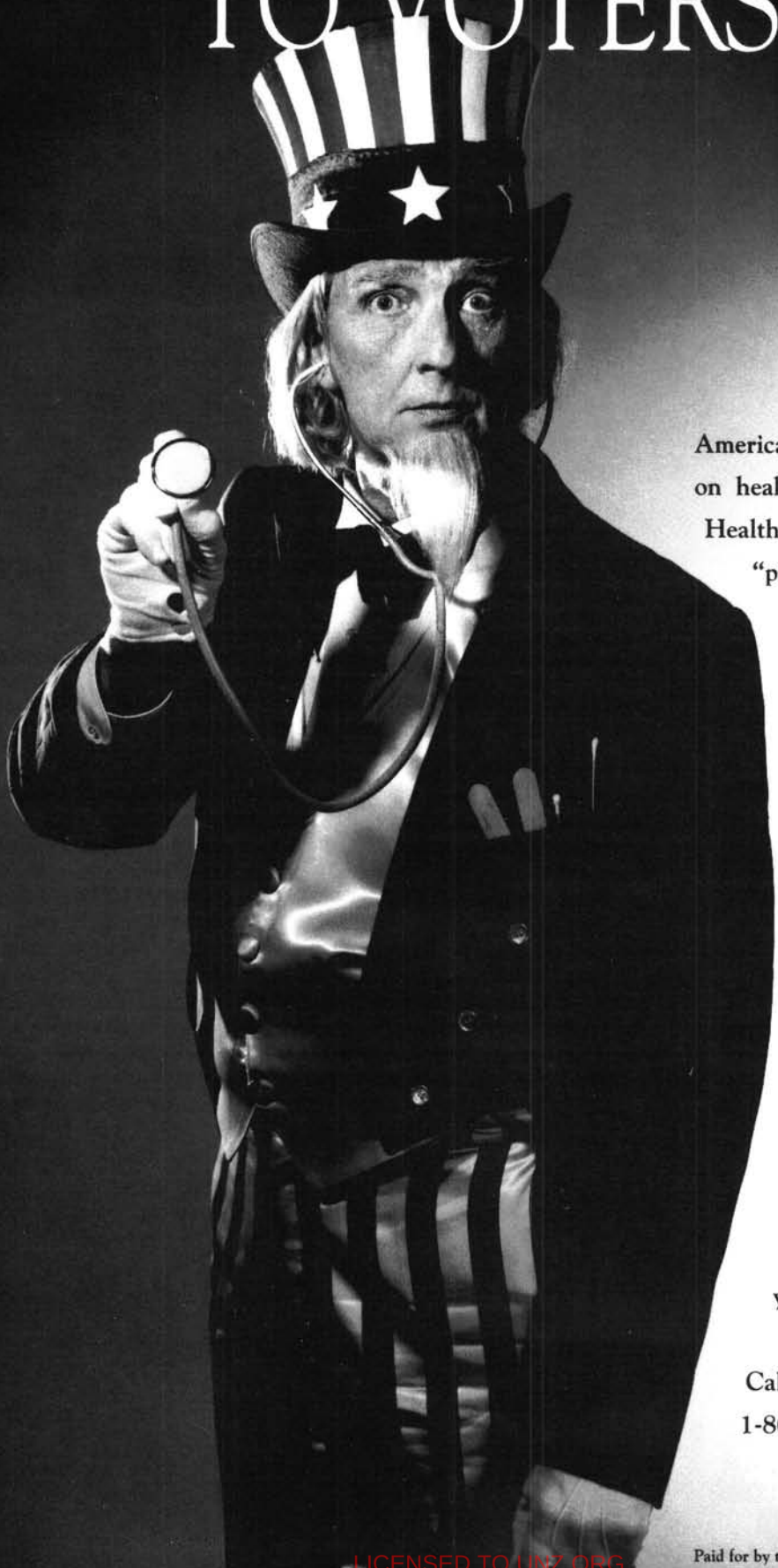

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

MARCH 30, 1992

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,028

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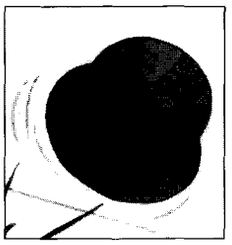

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THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 206, Number 13, Issue 4,028, March 30, 1992. (Printed in the U.S. on March 11, 1992.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 6 & 13, July 13 & 20, Aug. 17 & 24, and Sept. 7 & 14, 1992) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic/National Review joint advertising (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). © 1991 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322. For subscription problems call 800-274-6686.

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CORRESPONDENCE

Furrowed brows

To the editors:

In "The Case for Middlebrow" (March 2), Tad Friend defines "highbrow" taste to reflect the enthusiasms of pretentious undergraduates, then attacks it to glorify "unmediated and direct" middlebrow style. The midcentury critics of middlebrow, cited but not discussed by Friend, however, saw something else: cultural products that reinforce the prejudices and paper over the anxieties of their consumers. Middlebrow works deal with sexual anxiety by depicting predatory women or girl-slashing "beasts." Fear of social decay is conquered by lone vigilantes. Tragedies happen, but not to us. The high/middle distinction has to do with psychological content, not style. Plenty of middlebrow works are superficially "difficult."

And we listen to Messiaen over brunch? Yeah, right.

JONATHAN SCHEUER
New York, New York

To the editors:

Kudos for publishing "The Case for Middlebrow." It is extremely rare to find any kind of periodical of the political left praising anything middle class. I suspect that is because of a residual Marxism and its attendant deification of the proletariat (lowbrow), which seems to lead to confusion over where to put modern America's middle class.

The vast majority of both highbrow and "highlowbrow" art is produced by very frightened members of the middle class aping what they perceive to be their betters. A well-crafted work imbued with honesty will last. The self-conscious stance adopted by the stylistically correct creates only artifice (which no one really enjoys or appreciates, and which, mercifully, will cease being produced once the pretender is in his or her grave).

DAN THOMPSON
New York, New York

To the editors:

Tad Friend's description of Dwight Macdonald as a "culture guardian" is careless in the extreme. Macdonald was indeed a cultural elitist and often arrogant in categorizing works of art and literature according to his own upper-middle-class taste. But Macdonald was democratic in offering membership in the highbrow club to anyone that would prove his interest, not his talent. Ironically Friend's taste seems to coincide pretty much with Macdonald's. Friend has his own hierarchy, and he dismisses "bad middlebrow"—Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, Norman Rockwell's illustrations, Joyce Kilmer etc.—twenty-two years after Macdonald did. Edgar Allan Poe was Dwight's favorite American writer, and as far as I know he never dismissed "The Telltale Heart" as inferior to "The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym." But if he did, as a serious student of Poe, would that have made him some kind of intellectual elitist? Macdonald believed in well-informed discriminations. Isn't that what criticism is? As for having an appreciation of Chaplin and Keaton as "high art," Macdonald believed they were highbrow artists when he was in his 20s (1930s) and wrote a brilliant piece on Keaton as a serious artist in 1980, twelve years prior to Friend's discoveries. As for Macdonald being among those highbrow critics who were horrified that art could provide pleasure, he lectured for years to his students that if a piece of art did not provide pleasure, it was not art.

MICHAEL WRESZIN
New York, New York

To the editors:

"The Case for Middlebrow" was almost entirely enjoyable. This "almost" arises from Friend's lamentable wisecrack that "'Upstairs Downstairs' was just 'Dallas' with kippers." I share Friend's view that the travails of the Bellamy household provided middlebrow entertainment, yet I must protest his glib and utterly flawed characterization of Eaton Place as occupying the same middlebrow territory as South Fork, and differing only in "context." Not even the most rabid fan of the Ewings could credibly claim that "Dallas" was "distinguished by technical competence, singleness of affect, purity of emotion, tidiness of resolution, and modesty of scope," as Friend's own definition of middlebrow holds. Those of us who grieved at James Bellamy's suicide are affronted by the implication that the mystery of who shot J.R. (or Bobby) could conceivably be considered to exist on the same middlebrow plane.

Finally, as a longtime devotee of "Upstairs Downstairs" I can state with virtual certainty that there never was any mention of "kippers" in any script, not by Mrs. Bridges, by Lady Marjorie, and certainly not by Hudson.

JAMES L. POLIANITES
Boston, Massachusetts

To the editors:

That was a wonderful essay on middlebrow by Tad Friend. But it was Eddie Adams of the Associated Press who took the "shot of a Viet Cong prisoner getting his brains blown out," not Eddie Arnold (although I'm certain that Adams, at a certain hour of the night in Saigon, could have delivered stirring renditions of "Just a Little Lovin' Will Go a Long Way," "Make the World Go Away," or the foot soldier's anthem, "Mama, Come Get Your Baby Boy").

PETE HAMILL
New York, New York

To the editors:

Regarding Civil War photographer Brady, the highbrow knows how to spell his first name. The middlebrow spells it "Matthew."

JOE WILEY
Chicago, Illinois

To the editors:

I am at a loss trying to decide if reading "The Case for Middlebrow" is a highbrow thing to do. Please help.

MUN S. HO
Amherst, New York

Jodie of Arc

To the editors:

I appreciate Sidney Blumenthal's comparison between myself and Joan of Arc in his recent commentary on the Brown for President campaign ("Brownian Motion," March 2). For like Joan of Arc, I feel thrust in the middle of a battle to save my nation. Unlike the French patriot who fought off invading Anglo-Saxons, the battle that I have committed to is retaking the American government from a greedy elite who are profiting as our nation declines.

Our nation's political process has become nothing more than an incumbent protection system bought and paid for by a few special interests and upheld by their allies in the media. Our campaign is about restoring democracy to politics and our government. The first step in doing this must be creating a movement that is owned and controlled by the majority of people, which is why our campaign will not accept contributions of more than $100.

The Brown campaign's 800 number is a very successful tool of our organization. The 800 number was developed as an attempt to make the media interactive. We want people to be able to participate, from what they hear and see in the media, not be passive observers. We have received more than 100,000 calls to 1-800-426-1112 and pledges totaling close to $1.5 million. People who joined our campaign through the 800 number are now running as delegates, setting up organizations, and volunteering time across the nation.

This campaign is not simply about Jerry Brown, whose record on the environment, labor, civil rights, and most

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other issues is much more substantial than any of the other candidates. Our campaign is about creating a movement that can offer opposition to the current status quo and working for change, which our nation so desperately needs.

JODIE EVANS
Santa Monica, California

The writer is campaign manager for Brown for President.

Old and spent

To the editors:

In "Golden Girls" (February 3) Andrew Bates portrays elderly nursing home patients as affluent individuals who reshuffle their financial assets in order to bilk the Medicaid program into paying for their care. While such a portrait may arouse righteous indignation among your readers, it simply does not square with national survey data about the financial status of the disabled elderly.

Nearly one-fourth of all persons turning 65 can expect to spend more than a year in a nursing home. At today's prices, they should also expect to spend about $30,000 a year for that care. Analysis of the Survey of Income and Program Participation suggests that less than 7 percent of elderly nursing home patients could cover one year of care solely from their own income. Indeed, the disabled elderly are disproportionately low income. Fully 86 percent of disabled individuals age 75 and older, who constitute the vast majority of nursing home patients, have less than $15,000 (in 1989 dollars) in annual per capita income; two-thirds receive $7,500 or less in annual income.

As far as their savings are concerned, 57 percent of all disabled persons in the community over the age of 75 had less than $10,000 (in 1989 dollars) in total per capita financial assets. The point is that less than 10 percent of the entire disabled elderly population fits what Bates describes as the Medicaid estate planner's typical client profile—"individuals with between $100,000 and $400,000 in liquid assets." Few disabled elderly have large amounts of assets available to give away.

To be sure, there is some transfer of assets going on. Everyone has an anecdote or two or three. But a fair portrait of the economic status of the disabled elderly and how they finance their care should evoke sympathy and compassion, not righteous indignation.

RAYMOND J. HANLEY
JOSHUA M. WIENER
Washington, D.C.

The writers are senior research analyst and senior fellow, respectively, at the Brookings Institution.

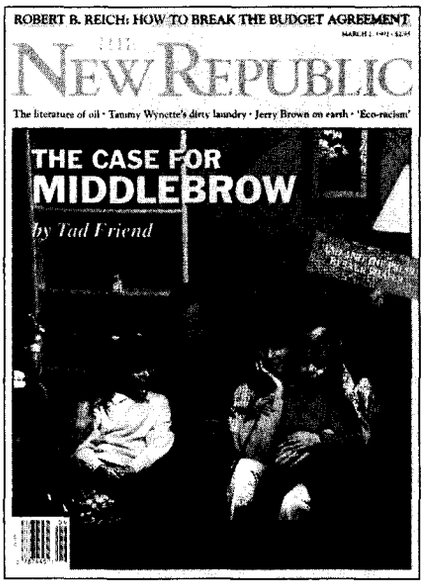
Andrew Bates replies:

Most state Medicaid directors will gladly tell Hanley and Wiener that Medicaid "estate planning" is a serious policy problem. No national study exists on the extent of the phenomenon, but a 1989 Department of Health and Human Services study of Washington state found that 58 percent of the Washington Medicaid nursing home cases that "were initially denied assistance because they exceeded the resource eligibility threshold became eligible within a few months by transferring or sheltering their assets." That's hardly an anecdote or two.

The other slavers

To the editors:

An interesting episode not covered in Brian Hecht's report on Leonard Jeffries's appearance at Harvard University ("Dr. Uncool J," March 2) revolved


ROBERT B. REICH: HOW TO BREAK THE BUDGET AGREEMENT
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The literatures of oil · Tammy Wynette's dirty laundry · Jerry Brown on earth · 'Eco-racism'
THE CASE FOR MIDDLEBROW
by Tad Friend

around a challenge to the CCNY professor to break his silence on the Arab slave trade. Why, I asked him, would he deliver a ninety-minute speech that rehearsed every depredation black people had ever suffered and *forget* to mention the only actual case of black slavery today—that being practiced by Muslims in Arab countries? Was he not aware, for example, of reports (*The Economist*, January 6, 1990) that Sudanese Muslims capture and sell black women and children of the Dinka tribe for $15 each? Could it be that his silence on this matter is related to his lengthy digressions on the handful of Jews involved in the slave trade hundreds of years ago?

After voicing his annoyance, Jeffries admitted that he knows firsthand from his travels in Africa about black slaves today in the Sudan, Mauritania, and Saudi Arabia. But he would give no reason for his silence about it. Would he take the case of Africa's slaves to the media? Jeffries demurred. Would he sign a petition against today's slavery in Muslim lands? No response.

It is simply a fact that when, much to the shame of all humanity, slaving was a common business, some Jews were involved. To focus on these, as though their sins are more meaningful than others', makes of this fact a defamation.

CHARLES JACOBS
Newton, Massachusetts

To the editors:

Leonard Jeffries also recently spoke at the State University of New York at Buffalo courtesy of the Black Students' Union. There were protests, but they went largely unheard. Vast amounts of money went for security to protect Jeffries. Whereas the money spent by Harvard on this event may be irrelevant since Harvard is privately funded, this is a state university where tuition has doubled this year (and will soon rise more) and where student fees have risen to amounts equal to that of tuition. This is also a university at which campus security is inadequate on every level.

JUNE B. COSTELLO
Buffalo, New York

Standing by

To the editors:

Alex Heard's piece on Tammy Wynette ("Stand By Your Men," March 2) is true enough till the last paragraph, wherein he asserts that Kitty Wells's "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels" was written as a "rebuttal to her husband's ode to the joys of painted-slut bar trash."

Wells's husband was and is Johnny Wright, in the 1950s half of the popular hillbilly duo Johnny and Jack and now a guitarist in his wife's band. Hank Thompson, who was never married to Wells, recorded the wildly successful 1952 hit "Wild Side of Life," to which "Angels" was the hugely popular rejoinder.

Both songs, incidentally, borrowed the melody of a nineteenth-century parlor ballad, "I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes." The singer of "Angels"—born Muriel Deason—got her name from "Kitty Wells," another old parlor weeper.

JEROME CLARK
Canby, Minnesota

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Santa clause

California's Proposition 13 of 1978 was the start of the middle-class tax revolt that has dominated American politics ever since. Fourteen years of mostly Republican political posturing later, the tax burden on the middle class is somehow higher than ever. Go figure. But a lucky few have done OK.

That plotline was built into Proposition 13 from the beginning, though few noticed at the time. Prop 13, a voter initiative, put a ceiling on the property tax of 1 percent of assessed value. It also rolled back assessments to their levels of 1975. It allowed assessments to increase no more than 2 percent a year. But—and this is the "but" that has brought Prop 13 before the U.S. Supreme Court in 1992—assessments could rise to market value whenever a property changed hands.

In California's overheated real estate market, the result is dramatic inequities. Stephanie Nordlinger, the woman who brought the Supreme Court case, bought her small home in Los Angeles in 1988 for $170,000, so she pays $1,700 a year in taxes. Her neighbors in nearly identical houses pay less than $400. Over the course of a decade, a recent buyer in Santa Monica will pay almost $51,000 in property tax while a longer-resident neighbor will pay $3,000. Nordlinger's Supreme Court brief is illustrated with photos of a Beverly Hills mansion whose owner pays less than the owner of a tiny bungalow in a less desirable neighborhood.

The unfairness here is of a particular sort increasingly characteristic of American society. Prop 13 was not, as advertised, a tax freeze. It was a tax increase with a grandfather clause. "Grandfather clause" is a legal term. After the Civil War, Southern state constitutions imposed strict rules for voting (to exclude blacks) but exempted anyone whose grandfather had voted (to include whites). Now a "grandfather clause" means any exemption from some change in the rules for those already aboard.

Prop 13's "welcome stranger" provision—as the tax increase for new arrivals is known—is literally a grandfather clause, since it allows property owners to pass property on to their descendants without losing their artificially low assessments. It also allows homeowners over 55 to take their low assessments with them when they move to a different house. In short, the earlier you climbed onto the California property bandwagon, the less of the burden of paying for schools and roads you are stuck with.

Although Prop 13 was a great right-wing crusade and rent control is regarded as a left-wing cause, the politics and economics of the two policies are actually similar. Both reward those in place at the expense of new arrivals. Both distort the market by encouraging people to hold onto property they no longer need. Both are defended on the ground of helping the poor but give much of their benefit to the affluent. Yet conservatives are egging on the Supreme Court to find rent control unconstitutional (as a "taking" under the Fifth Amendment), while they root for the Court to dismiss this challenge to Prop 13.

The Social Security system is a giant grandfather clause, providing current retirees a return on their invested dollar far greater than today's workers are promised—let alone what we will actually receive. Another example of grandfather clause thinking is the so-called "two-tier" wage scales that became common in the 1980s, under which new hires get paid less than established workers—not just until they build seniority, but permanently.

Sometimes grandfather clause arrangements are useful as a way to grease the gears of change. Those with the most power to stand in the way of necessary changes—be they higher taxes or lower wages—are in essence bribed not to interfere. More often, though, grandfather clause arrangements clog the wheels of change—discouraging people from freeing up unneeded apartments or houses, encouraging stasis.

Yes, yes, but something can be stupid and unfair without being unconstitutional. Or, as the Los Angeles County assessor charmingly defends himself in his brief, "The method of taxation chosen by California need not be the best choice—indeed, it need not even be a wise choice." But that doesn't mean that the Supreme Court should interfere. Should it?

A couple of recent precedents look pretty good for Ms. Nordlinger. A 1982 opinion by Justice O'Connor threw out an Alaska law giving every Alaska citizen $50 per year of residence from the state's oil royalties. The reasoning was that this unconstitutionally discriminated against recent arrivals. Then in 1989, Chief Justice Rehnquist wrote a decision invalidating a "welcome stranger" tax assessment system for coal mines in West Virginia.

California argues that Prop 13 is different from these precedents since it discriminates against all new homebuyers, not just out-of-staters, and since it is official statewide policy, not just the work of one lone assessor. The state's strongest argument is that it has simply chosen to tax "acquisition cost" rather than current value. California's property tax, in other words, is just a large sales tax spread over a number of years, and therefore not discriminatory against anyone.

The hardest "equal protection" cases to make are those where the victims of a discriminatory government policy are not some identifiable group such as blacks or women but rather some seemingly random collection of individuals. But the plaintiff's brief argues rather convincingly that Prop 13's discrimination in favor of established homeowners and against new purchasers is not just random, but rather "the old, old story of a politically dominant majority privileging itself at the expense of an inchoate and politically unrepresented group."

A clever piece in *The Wall Street Journal*, by David Henderson of the conservative Hoover Institution, argues that new homebuyers don't actually lose out at all under the "welcome stranger" provision of Prop 13. He reasons that the higher taxes any buyer will have to pay get factored into the price all buyers are willing to pay, and thus the real loser is the seller, who must accept a lower price. This may be true to some extent. But the seller's knowledge that by selling he will lose his own tax break (unless he is over 55 and buying another property) will also get factored into the bargaining and result in the seller holding out for a higher price. It is impossible to say which of these factors will predominate. But whoever gets stuck with the effective burden of higher taxes from the moment of sale, people who owned homes at the time of Prop 13 enjoyed a windfall that subsequent buyers have not.

Whatever the Supreme Court decides, the net effect of Proposition 13 will not have been to reduce the tax burden so much as to shift it to future generations. That's a metaphor for the tax revolt in general.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MARCH 30, 1992

THE OTHER MINORITY

Of Patrick Buchanan's views about Jews and blacks we now know a great deal. Whether in code or subtle rhetoric, his animus against those parts of the population he didn't see regularly at Mass in the 1950s is clear. Whether we pin the words "racist" or "anti-Semitic" to his name is a point on which sincere people can disagree—as they have done, at length, in these pages—but the spirit of his remarks is beyond any doubt. What's also clear is Buchanan's technique: he expresses contempt by inference and indirection. "This rally," he told some Jewish protesters, "is of Americans, and by Americans and for the good old U.S.A." He excludes by including. When he wants to attack, he uses cryptic references—"the Amen corner" or "bongo drums"—to make his point.

With another group of Americans, however, Buchanan's hatred is direct. In a manner that he spares even blacks and Jews, Buchanan assails homosexuals. Even those TV stars who defend their friend from charges of anti-Semitism readily concede Buchanan's loathing of gays. His position, moreover, is not prettified by a political argument. He rarely grapples with the debate over gay civil rights or domestic partnership or hate crimes. There are legitimate conservative arguments to be made here, some of which are even heard within the gay world itself. But to enter into such a debate would be to concede that gays are part of America, that they pay taxes, create wealth, and are equal members of our society. And that is something Buchanan will not concede.

A year ago, when protesters threw missiles and abuse at gay marchers in New York's Saint Patrick's Day parade, Buchanan sided with those practicing violence. In a column he wrote: "To discriminate is to choose. We all discriminate in our choice of associates and friends. And p judice simply means prejudgment. Not all prejudgments are rooted in ignorance; most are rooted in the inherited wisdom of the race. A visceral recoil from homosexuality is the natural reaction of a healthy society wishing to protect itself." In 1977 Buchanan urged a "thrashing" of gay rights groups. "Homosexuality," he wrote, "is not a civil right. Its rise almost always is accompanied, as in the Weimar Republic, with a decay of society and a collapse of its basic cinder block, the family."

On the subject of AIDS, Buchanan argues that the virus that has devastated thousands of gay lives and killed tens of thousands of heterosexuals worldwide is "divine retribution" against gays. On television last year, he claimed that "from the homosexuals, you get the blood supply tainted, you get their wives and their girlfriends get it [sic] who give it to the babies, you get the hemophiliacs' blood supply and all the rest of it." When not implying that gay men are directly culpable for spreading HIV to others, he uses words like "perverted," "destructive," and "pederast proletariat" about them, and has argued that "promiscuous homosexuals appear literally hell-bent on Satanism and suicide."

Very few commentators have protested or even questioned these remarks. No political rival has. We find that chilling in a liberal society. Many of Buchanan's statements are factually untrue; all of them are designed to inflame popular prejudice against a minority already deemed unspeakable in many parts of this country.

The silence is particularly damning for Republicans. The party has claimed to recast itself in recent years as a party of inclusion and opportunity. To their credit, Republican Governors Bill Weld of Massachusetts and Pete Wilson of California have addressed gay issues. Robert Mosbacher, George Bush's campaign manager, whose daughter is openly lesbian, recently met with gay leaders. George Bush himself signed a hate crimes bill that for the first time allowed the recording of acts of violence against gays. Buchanan quite simply represents the ugly reverse of this strategy. A week after running a political ad specifically catering to anti-gay prejudice, Buchanan called for Bush to disown Mosbacher. "I would like to see a statement from Mr. Bush that 'Mr. Mosbacher doesn't represent us,'" he demanded.

We would like to see a statement from Mr. Bush as well. His response to Buchanan's anti-gay ad was to fire the chairman of the NEA for his seeming tolerance of gay art. When pushed by the right last year, the president's response was similar, barring HIV-positive immigrants from this country. Throughout his presidency, he has tried to have it both ways, appeasing gay groups while throwing red meat to his right. But Buchanan's direct vilification of gays forces the issue onto another level of seriousness. The question now is whether George Bush's Republican Party approves of Buchanan's kind of hatemongering. And whether the president of the United States has the decency to disown it. •

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SAME TO YOU, BUDDY

"Fuck the Jews. They didn't vote for us." Other newspapers and journals have been reluctant to print these words from the secretary of state, so we are happy to oblige our more curious readers. According to a reliable source, Mr. Baker used this expression at a meeting of high-level administration officials, when challenged about his hostility toward Israel. Baker's spokeswoman, Margaret Tutwiler, described an article in which the former mayor of New York City, Ed Koch, made the accusation as "false." "It is outrageous. It is garbage."

Frankly, we don't believe Ms. Tutwiler. The context of Mr. Baker's remark makes it all too credible. Rumors of it had spread through Washington days before Mr. Koch's article appeared. And the remark is of a piece with the Bush administration's entire policy toward the Middle East and its view of politics as a whole. It should surprise no one. All that should surprise is that few journalists have been prepared to challenge the State Department on it and that James Baker took several days to deny it himself.

There are three potential interpretations of the remark. The first is simply that it reflects the administration's cynicism about politics in general, in which virtually all matters of policy are filtered through the gray prism of political interest. A second interpretation is that Baker's "gaffe" (a quintessential Washington gaffe in that it conveyed the truth about Baker's intentions) reflects a political distaste for American Jews that walks right up to the edge of anti-Semitism, if fails to cross it. A third is that it reflects a foreign policy that, at this point, is almost entirely directed by domestic political considerations.

We find all three interpretations plausible. The first is unsurprising in most administrations, and particularly unshocking in this one. The last is deeply problematic for a successful foreign policy. When diplomacy is driven by domestic obsessions, it rarely achieves its external aims. But it's the second interpretation that is the most distressing. By his words and by his actions, Secretary Baker has made it virtually impossible for any Israeli, of whatever political stripe, to trust him. By threatening Israel to suspend loan guarantees because of settlements before any direct peace negotiations have begun, Baker has made it difficult for any Israeli politician to feel he is dealing with an honest broker. With this remark, furthermore, he has revealed a damning and dark possible reason for his intransigence. The result will be a stalemate—for Israel, for the United States, and for a real peace in the Middle East. "Fuck the Jews" is not merely a revealing expression of bigotry. It is also a self-fulfilling expression of failure.

NOTEBOOK

BUSHISM OF THE WEEK: "Somebody—somebody asked me, what's it take to win? I said to them, I can't remember, what does it take to win the Super Bowl? Or maybe Steinbrenner, my friend George, will tell us what it takes for the Yanks to win—one run. But I went over to the Strawberry Festival this morning, and ate a piece of shortcake over there—able to enjoy it right away, and once I completed it, it didn't have to be approved by Congress—I just went ahead and ate it—and that leads me into what I want to talk to you about today..." —March 4, at a fund-raising lunch in Tampa, Florida

DESIGNER DONS: From the lavish, adoring coverage in the New York papers you might think Salvatore Gravano and John Gotti were opera singers, fashion designers, or perhaps celebrated chefs. In fact, they are cold-blooded murderers, who have jointly, if not individually, killed more people in New York than Jeffrey Dahmer did in Milwaukee. It's not hard to understand why the public is fascinated by the folkways of what remains of the Italianate Mafia. But it is hard to defend the aestheticization of evil that surrounds trials like Gotti's latest. Killing isn't any prettier when it wears a Versace suit or sounds like the latest character from David Mamet.

THAT'S MENACHEM:

Begin conscious, still critical

—*The Miami Herald*, March 5

(thanks to Jean Fitzgerald, Fort Lauderdale, Florida)

URBAN SQUALOR: *Financial World* magazine recently published its second annual survey of city finances and management. Then it sent a letter to the mayors of the cities ranked in the bottom twenty, inviting them to a seminar on how to improve their standing. The cost for the one-day course: $10,000. The letter claims that bond rating agencies take the rankings into account—but Moody's Investors Service says it doesn't even subscribe. Based on this stunt, nobody else should either.

PAYING FOR THE MICROPHONE:

Jackson Takes High Road in Open-Mike Flap

—*The Washington Post*, February 28

In Response to Apology by Clinton, Jackson Takes a Jab

—*The New York Times*, same day

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PUSHOVER:
"Herschel [Walker] was bounced from the four-man bobsled because he couldn't push off any better than Sissy Spacek." —Tony Kornheiser, *The Washington Post*, February 20

"He's [Walker's] the fastest pushman the U.S. has in the four-man competition." —Michael Wilbon, same paper, same sports section, same day.
(Thanks to Burling Lowrey, Washington, D.C.)

CORRECTIONS: "Dirt Trail" by Bob Cohn (TNR, January 6 & 13) erroneously states that Anita Hill "consulted with Catharine MacKinnon" in preparing her testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee. She did not. Our apologies to MacKinnon and Hill. Also, a sentence in Karen Lehrman's review of *Backlash* and *Revolution from Within* ("The Feminist Mystique," March 16) was mysteriously garbled. It should have read: "These tensions of identity politics are actually bringing feminism much closer to a 'third stage'—in which self transcends gender—than many in the movement would like to believe."

CHEERS: Felicitations to TNR Contributing Editor Robert Coles on the publication of his new book, *Anna Freud: The Dream of Psychoanalysis* (Addison-Wesley). •

Japan's America-bashers.

AIBEI

By Gerald J. Cardinale

TOKYO

A few weeks before President Bush brought his traveling trade show to Japan, the Japanese visited middle-class America—and didn't like what they saw. On a congested streetcorner, pedestrians crowded around a series of television screens to watch Ted Koppel. In his interviews of three GM assembly-line workers facing imminent layoffs, Koppel searched for the message that average Americans wanted Bush to take to Japan. The comments weren't very friendly. After a few moments, a Japanese friend turned to me and said, "You Americans are incredibly arrogant. Why must you criticize us when we are economically stronger? Who do you think you are?"

The current catch-phrase for alleged Japanese hostility toward America is *kenbei*. Quite simply, it means "a fundamental dislike of America." The neologism first appeared last April to describe the initial opposition to American intervention in the Persian Gulf. Before the war, the only prevalent term to describe anti-Americanism was *hanbei*, referring to the ideological opposition to the U.S.-Japan security alliance, a position most represented by Japan's Socialist Party.

Yet although *kenbei* has been getting a lot of play in the media, it doesn't quite reflect the feelings of most Japanese. Well-publicized polls that have claimed *kenbei* is increasing among young people (a finding that alarms many observers who see this segment of the Japanese population as the most Americanized) turn out to be wrong. According to Seizaburo Sato, an adviser to former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone and author of a confidential Foreign Ministry study last year on the *kenbei* phenomenon, the surveys "are entirely misleading ... younger people in Japan have always been somewhat less pro-American than older generations.... The amount of *kenbei* among youths today is no more pervasive than it was thirty years ago, and as it stands it is very marginal."

Five months after the Gulf war, *Voice*, one of the Japanese opinion magazines credited with promoting the term *kenbei*, conducted a series of interviews with Japanese academics and professionals well-informed about the U.S.-Japan relationship. The interviews shared the theme that some other word was needed to describe accurately the attitude toward America. For Jiro Ushio, chairman of a Tokyo electronics company, that concept should be *kyobei*, meaning fear of the United States. For Yasuo Ohara, a professor at Kokugakuin University, the feelings are more one of *datsubei*, or growing independence from the United States. Kazuaki Harada, the director of the Sanwa Research Institute, describes himself as *shinbei*, or pro-U.S., and sees "cooperation between our two countries as the foundation for the prosperity of the world economic system." Kazuya Fakuda, a Tokyo cultural and literary critic, takes Harada's optimism one step further, adopting "a position best described as *aibei*, meaning 'loving the U.S.' I propose a Marshall Plan for America, which would develop a system for feeding American people, solve such problems as drugs and education, and establish a management plan for American companies."

Perhaps the most poignant description of this mixture of sympathy and condescension comes from Shoichi Watanabe, a professor and co-author of *The Japan That Can Still Say No*: "Japan's economy has grown remarkably ... and yet politically it continues to be regarded as a defeated country. The United States, however, has become aged and weak, and yet it still wears the large clothes it has always worn.... Those who wear clothes that are too big may not realize it, but to those around them, they look pitiful." Disappointment and pity are, of course, feelings that are much harder to

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reverse, because unlike the hatred of *kenbei*, they entail a fundamental loss of respect that is much more lasting. Pity is not as dangerous as anger; but it's often more long-lasting and profound. Just ask an American what he thinks of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

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FALKLANDS POSTCARD

SQUID CITY

By Ian Katz

Stanley, the capital of the Falklands and home to 1,600 of the islands' 2,100 inhabitants, is not quite the distant outpost it used to be. Teenagers listen to rap music and Phil Collins on portable compact disc players; their parents, many of whom grew up working on sheep farms, drive to places they could walk to in three minutes. Everyone in Stanley seems to have a TV and VCR. The busiest places in town—other than the five pubs—are the three stores that rent videos.

It wasn't long ago that the "Kelpers," as the islanders are called, couldn't afford pop culture or laziness. Theirs was a perilously one-dimensional economy, dependent on wool exports from sheep farming, and decaying so badly in the early 1980s that Argentina didn't expect Britain to bother defending it. But the turning point wasn't the Argentine invasion of April 2, 1982, or the ensuing ten-week war won by the British. The change began when the Kelpers, who get their name from the seaweed that grows around the islands, found squid in their South Atlantic waters.

Or rather, they didn't find it; others did. The islanders themselves didn't have the resources to run a fishing enterprise, so in the mid-1980s the local government started selling fishing licenses to foreigners in a bid to raise revenues. The islands now take in $50 million a year—65 percent of the Falklands' total operating revenue—by allowing vessels from Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Spain, and Poland to fish offshore. The farmers, who have seen the price of wool fall by 50 percent over the past three years, have been rescued. "Sheep farming is part of our ethos," says Falklands Governor William Fullerton. But ethos doesn't pay the bills, so the government annually sets aside about $3.5 million in squid money to prop up fewer than 100 farms.

Squid money has also enabled the government to improve the formerly antiquated infrastructure without having to beg London for funds. The islands' first modern telephone system—one far superior to Argentina's—was installed less than two years ago. And about $18 million is being spent to build roads that will connect Stanley to the farm settlements known as "the camp."

If the Falklanders have been left "bewildered" by the changes since the war, as one legislative council member described it, they are not remotely prepared for what could come next. Energy firms are expected to bid this spring for the right to conduct seismic surveys in the islands' waters. Locals agents for petroleum companies say several major players, including British Petroleum, are interested. If the surveys turn out positive, exploration could begin within months. That would change everything all over again, since the driller would need a place to put its workers. One Kelper representing an interested oil firm said just one or two rigs in the Falklands' self-declared territorial waters, which extend 200 miles from land, could double the population.

That's bad news for the old-timers, who already grouse that prosperity has ruined the character of the Falklands. It's become too British and less distinct, they complain. The once bare-walled, dimly lit drinking rooms have been renovated into plush London-style pubs, where youths frolic like fraternity brothers on "karaoke sing-along" nights.

Yet Stanley is no Soho. As yuppie as the youngsters try to be, they still live nowhere near anywhere—in a town without a movie theater or daily newspaper. The only flights arrive twice a week from England and weekly from Chile. Departing passengers can be certain they have a seat only when they hear their names broadcast the night before on the Falklands' lone radio station. Islanders tune in every evening as they would to a favorite soap opera. If they know someone traveling the next day, they might pass along a package for someone on another island. When the knob broke off the front door of the Warrah Guest House, where I stayed, the innkeeper lamented that it might be weeks before the necessary screw would arrive on a boat from England. For my hosts, preparing a simple salad was a challenge. The fruit and vegetables that arrive by ship from Chile are often no longer fresh after the two-day trip.

No matter where you go, it's impossible to forget the war. Members of a bomb disposal unit still search for mines, a job made especially difficult, they say, because the Argentineans didn't make very thorough maps. Stray mortars and grenades are found nearly every week, and fenced-off areas containing live mines dot the beaches outside Stanley. The bomb disposal boys give maps marking known and suspected mine fields to anyone wanting to walk along the shore. I lost my map when the wind blew it out of my hands and into—of course—a mine field.

Argentina, for its part, would like to put the war behind it. Buenos Aires still claims sovereignty and says it will achieve it by peaceful, diplomatic means. The government of Carlos Menem wants to renew travel and other links to the Falklands, now banned by Britain. The

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Courting Ethnic Strife

BY ALBERT SHANKER, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

America's schools have always been subject to fads and crazes, and a revisionist multiculturalism is the latest. Of course, America is a multicultural society, and we have been from the beginning. Our textbooks and curriculums now reflect this fact, and they should. But that's not what the new multiculturalism is about. It has nothing to do with the public schools' traditional role of helping children from various ethnic groups learn to live and work together and everything to do with strengthening and enhancing what separates them. This is dangerous for our schools and our society, as Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., points out in his brilliant and troubling book, *The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992).

It's true that, at one time, American history was presented as a story of white men ruling and making all the important contributions. This kind of history was essentially a patriotic saga—Schlesinger calls it "top-dog history"—showing the inevitable upward progress of the nation. It was designed to create loyalty and patriotism, and it did that. But it was incomplete and it was not honest. It ignored the fact that America had not always lived up to its ideals—that some groups, notably African-Americans and native Americans, were deprived of their rights under the Constitution. And it ignored the contributions of a number of racial and ethnic groups. These distortions have largely been corrected in our history books and curriculums, and I don't know anybody today who would defend that kind of patriotic saga of progress.

We've always seen our schools as places where kids from various groups would learn to live together.

But the new multiculturalists want to go to the other extreme—from the extreme of glorifying America to the extreme of putting down everything American. For them, "Americanize" is a dirty word. They want to present this country as a place where only bad things have happened to people who are not white Europeans. Instead of teaching children that they all share a civic culture to which every group has contributed, they want to make kids believe that the common culture is a sham and that their true identity and true self-interest lie in the fact they belong to different cultures.

New multiculturalists also want to turn history—and other subjects—into mythology. They say that large numbers of Hispanic and African-American children are not doing well in school because they lack self-esteem. The way to remedy this problem is to present children with stories in which everything done by people in their group is heroic and glorious. Of course it's desirable to have pride in your ancestors, but there's no evidence that it will lead you to do better in math or English. And multicultural efforts to engender that pride can lead to claims that are baseless and even ludicrous. The Portland Baseline Essays, for example, maintain that the ancient Egyptians (who are identified by the essays as black Africans) developed the theory of evolution thousands of years before Darwin, as well as quantum physics and aviation.

The danger of this kind of curriculum to our kids and our society is obvious. Schools are educating our future leaders—our scholars, scientists, business people and politicians. They should be teaching young people how to evaluate evidence and how to separate fact from fiction. But there is little chance that kids will get these basic intellectual tools if the evidence for a historical event (or a scientific theory) is less important than the ethnic group of the person presenting it.

The new multiculturalism is also a threat to public education. Americans have always seen public schools as places where children from various groups would learn to live together and value each other and where they would become acquainted with the common civic culture. If public schools become places where children learn that, fundamentally, they are not American, there will be no reason for taxpayers to continue supporting them. And there will be little to hold our society together.

Jan Urban, the leader of the Civic Forum, which was the major force in Czechoslovakia's Velvet Revolution, was in this country a couple of years ago for the AFT convention. This was before the demise of the Soviet Union or the disintegration of Yugoslavia. He attended some discussions of the new multicultural curriculums, and he could not believe his ears. He said, "Do you realize that every country in Europe—Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania—is looking at this great miracle, which is the U.S. We cannot understand how different people can live together for hundreds of years and think of themselves as one. We are trying to understand how to emulate you so we can remain unified and not return to the racism, pogroms and wars of the past. And as we look to you for an answer, you are about to turn around and head in our direction."

Will Americans heed what Jan Urban has to tell us? Perhaps we can draw some hope from the fact that public opposition to this destructive brand of multiculturalism is no longer limited mainly to conservatives. Distinguished liberals and leftists like Schlesinger, Irving Howe and Eugene Genovese—people who see the faults in our society but do not want to use our schools to teach falsehood or heighten racial conflict—have joined the fray.

A lot of school districts are adopting, or thinking of adopting, one of these new multicultural curriculums because they think the curriculums are harmless or might even do a little bit of good. Before they do so, they owe it to themselves—and their students—to read *The Disuniting of America.*

MR. SHANKER'S COMMENTS APPEAR IN THIS AD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS. READER CORRESPONDENCE IS INVITED. ADDRESS YOUR LETTERS TO MR. SHANKER AT THE AFT, 555 NEW JERSEY AVE., N.W., WASHINGTON, DC 20001. ©1991 BY ALBERT SHANKER.

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idea is to increase influence gradually so that the islanders get used to—or even like—being among Argentineans. The Falklanders, who insist on living under the British flag, find that funny at best and arrogant at second-best. Argentina's historical claims are almost as old as the republic (just four years younger), and its nearest shores lie less than 350 miles from the islands, which the Argentineans call Las Malvinas. But I couldn't find anything even remotely Argentine in Stanley. Islanders use sterling for currency, drive on the left, drink lager, bitter, and cider, and speak English in an accent that seems a cross between British and Australian.

Relations between Britain and Argentina are warming—too fast for the Falklanders. Diplomatic ties were resumed in February 1990 after the nations agreed to set aside the sovereignty issue, which no one was going to budge on anyway. Trade and kind words have increased dramatically, and Menem is planning to visit London in 1993. Britain has periodically assured its South Atlantic subjects that there will be no "Falklands sellout" without their approval. So why are the Kelpers nervous? There are two facts of life, they say: Argentina will always claim the Falklands, and Falklanders will never accept even the faint prospect of becoming Argentineans. They welcome squid, and might be grateful for oil, but there is only so much change they can take.

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Me and Michael Jackson.

THRILLER

By Peter Sagal

Everyone in Los Angeles, says the stereotype, sits around and waits for his or her agent to call. One day mine did, and told me that I had landed a job as an extra, the role of the "Snake Charmer" in fact, on the new Michael Jackson music video, "Remember the Time." The shoot was non-union and the pay was below scale, and I couldn't see how this would help my career, but it seemed like a chance to be a part of history, if only recent history. Besides, how could I turn down the chance, however slim, to meet the Ludwig of Bavaria of the entertainment world?

The shoot was based in Soundstage 36 on the Universal lot, which housed a large set representing an ancient Egyptian temple. The video—the script of which was a tightly guarded secret even on the set—was to depict Jackson on the go in a kind of *Ebony* magazine version of ancient Egypt, ruled over by such African-American luminaries as Eddie Murphy and Magic Johnson. But the stars had been dispensed with the day before—today was the grub work, the filler shots involving the extras or, as we were called, "background."

Most of the other backgrounders were black, and all of them told more or less the same story. "I never do extra work," they said, "but for this I made an exception." For most, it was the chance to meet John Singleton, the director of the video, rather than Jackson that made them forgo their pride. The Industry had anointed the young director of *Boyz N the Hood*, and for black actors in particular a relationship with him might lead to great things.

Once word got around that I was the Snake Charmer I immediately became the object of envy. Everyone knew Jackson preferred animals to people, so in the hopeful logic of the extra I was guaranteed at least a close-up. I began fantasizing too—maybe the snake would be Jackson's own, from his famous menagerie. Maybe I would have the chance to save it from—from whatever it is that could endanger a snake, and earn Michael's undying gratitude. One of the other extras turned out to be a real snake charmer, and I could tell he was bitter when I told him the closest I had ever come to a snake was from behind the glass at the Reptile Museum and Show in Sarasota, Florida. "Well," he sniffed, "I'm glad I'm not doing it. I don't like working with strange snakes. They're more likely to bite you."

Eventually I was sent with the group of Shopkeepers to the makeup wagon outside. We were waiting for the harassed staff to finish with the group ahead of us—"What are you?" "I'm a Miscellaneous Woman"—when a very young black man in a goatee and round sunglasses wandered up and shook our hands. He looked like a production assistant trying to dress like Spike Lee. "Anybody here speak Arabic?" he asked. "I do, I do!" said Anthony, the guy next to me. "Great," said Goatee, and he wandered away to sit in a golf cart and stare off into space. "That's him," whispered somebody. "That's who?" I said. "That's *Singleton*. That's the director." Anthony, proud at having grabbed an opportunity, took me by the shoulder. "Hey," he asked. "You know any Arabic?"

My first glimpse of Jackson was both lucky and brief. I was wandering back into the soundstage, having waited around for more than four hours, when a golf cart shot out. At the wheel was an older man, Jackson's "chief of security," and on the right side was a blond woman. Between them was Jackson. His nose and mouth were covered by a black cloth mask, his eyes with sunglasses. He waved languidly to the crew members as he shot by, and vanished around a corner.

I turned and looked back into the north end of the soundstage. That end of the building was empty except for an ultra-deluxe Winnebago, almost completely hidden by black curtains. Two security guards stood nearby. "Our company works for Michael all the time," one told me. "He likes us, because we protect his privacy. We keep people away from him, fans, people who are hanging around, extras like you. He's very sensitive—if he doesn't

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feel safe on the set, he just doesn't show up. On 'Black or White' he just didn't show up for two days." The guard said he liked his employer, although he thought him odd at times. I asked him why Jackson wears the mask. "To keep out the smog," he said. "And not to be recognized." The entire crew, I was told later, had to sign agreements not to approach, talk to, or harass Jackson in any way, including asking him for an autograph or simply staring.

At about 3 p.m., seven hours after we arrived, vans took us to Soundstage 40, the location of the "Marketplace" set. The first shot, which featured the Pharaoh's guards rooting through the marketplace, presumably looking for the evasive Jackson, went off well. Watching on a monitor, I saw that Anthony had landed a prominent role, playing the Irritated Shopkeeper. He gesticulated wildly and shouted as the guards overturned his baskets and boxes. I hoped he was shouting the line I taught him in makeup, the one Arabic phrase I could remember: "*Anna mish khawaga,*" or, "I'm not a dumb tourist."

After lunch at 5 p.m., we were back on the set to prepare for the first shot with Jackson. After an hour of rehearsal, everything was set and silence suffused the cavernous stage. A door swung open and two large, well-dressed men entered, followed by an attendant or two, and then Jackson himself, resplendent in his Neo-Egyptian skirt and something resembling a brassiere made from fish scales, followed by his entourage. For a man who didn't want to attract attention, Jackson certainly knew how to make an entrance. He held the hand of a remarkably beautiful young girl of 10 or 11 years; his niece, someone said. Whenever he was not on camera, he was holding her hand. The security guards cleared the way through the soundstage for him, and of course everyone stared, although we tried not to be obvious about it.

The shot called for Jackson to enter the set from a doorway, lip-synching the song, and sashay across the marketplace; no serious dancing. Jackson handled himself well, and the shot soon wound down. Afterward I tracked down Singleton, who was talking to some of the extras. I said hello and was trying out an opening schmooze gambit when everyone became distracted by something over my shoulder; they straightened and fell silent. I turned to find myself not two feet from Jackson, on his way off the set.

"Hello," he said to me, holding out his hand. "Nice to meet you," I said, shaking it. His grip was very weak and gentle; so was mine. Another extra cheerfully called out something about a softball team that he had played on, apparently, with one or two of Jackson's brothers; Michael nodded gracefully and said he remembered. But he was eager to leave, and so he did, his hand tightly held, his way carefully prepared. The door closed behind the last of his entourage, his personal archivist turned off his camcorder, and we broke for dinner.

What happened to the snake? Union troubles delayed the shoot, and the "Snake Charmer" sequence was cut to save time. At 11:30 p.m., after sixteen hours of standing around, I was told to turn in my burnoose and go home. I did. They say out here that if a film is made well, you can see the money "up on the screen." I can say with certainty that there is $92.16 of "Remember the Time" 's budget that even my mother can't see.

PETER SAGAL is a journalist and playwright living in L.A.

Noriega on trial.

CANNED PINEAPPLE

By Cathy Booth

MIAMI

It's Court TV's good luck that cameras are barred from the trial of Manuel Noriega. Unlike the titillating testimony in Palm Beach about William Kennedy Smith's sexual prowess, the trial of America's only prisoner of war has been, alas, a ratings bore. The judge, jury, and press have all been spied snoozing. The sallow-looking CIA fellow, who slips into court to monitor leaks of classified information, has been reduced to doing crossword puzzles. Noriega's own lawyer, Frank Rubino, apologized recently for boring the jury "to death." One wonders how that went down with a client who faces 140 years in prison.

The most entertaining moments so far have been out of the jury's earshot, during bench conferences with the two legal teams and Judge William Hoeveler. Transcripts of these exchanges make the opposing attorneys sound like whiny schoolboys arguing over a ball. Usually the back and forth involves Rubino, a member of Miami's white powder bar, and Myles Malman, the priggish Felix Unger of the government prosecution team. Here's a sample: "Myles is gilding the lily." "I am not gilding the lily." ... "I don't mind giving you the hors d'oeuvres, Frank. I am damn tired of serving you the main course." ... "I will give you one of my chocolate cookies, Myles, and everything will be all right." Thanks, replies Malman, "I've got the prosecution's version of the chocolates." So goes the most important drug trial in history.

Noriega, for his part, hasn't played the thug very well. Despite his pressed uniform, beady eyes, and pitted face, Panama's ex-strongman looks harmless these days. His secret digs, believed to be in the Miami Federal Courthouse, apparently don't give him much chance to tan or exercise a waistline expanded by Oreo cookies. (His lawyers carry a supply in their briefcases.) During breaks, the onetime "Maximum Leader" of Panama has been observed running down a list of things to do with wife Felicidad like any harried husband. Perhaps he's worried about paying his Gold Visa bills: his three daughters haven't worn the same dress twice during nearly five months of proceedings, and Felicidad

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recently seems to have bought herself a face-lift. Noriega ruined his image further by cooing over a baby in court. It follows, of course, that he's found religion too.

By now, each of the twelve jurors has a stack of notebooks full of testimony, but they must be wondering who edited out the good stuff. Remember when there were hints of a subpoena against George Bush himself? When the defense threatened to bring in Oliver North to talk about Noriega's help in supplying the contras? And what of Fidel Castro, who was supposed to appear by videotape to say Noriega gave him messages from the United States? Throughout the prosecution case, there were glimpses of a sensational defense that would claim Noriega had been a dupe—along with the U.S. government—of pilots on contract with the CIA who flew guns to the Nicaraguan rebels and returned home with drugs via Panama. Gone, all gone.

Call Oliver Stone. Obviously, there's some conspiracy brewing here. Was evidence crucial to the defense shredded in Washington? Or was there no evidence at all? Or would the evidence have hurt Noriega? We may never know. But somewhere between the prosecution resting in December and the defense starting in February, Noriega's lawyers decided to drop the guns-for-drugs argument. Instead, they were reduced to using hostile American drug agents with memories like sieves, who couldn't remember much about their cooperation with the Panamanian Defense Forces. On the other hand, Noriega's subordinates who testified (some by videotape from Panamanian prisons) displayed minds like steel traps, recalling every word said more than five years ago.

What emerged was a portrait of Noriega in a white hat, helping to interdict almost 2 million pounds of marijuana, snaring the Medellín cartel's top money launderer, closing down a bank owned by the Cali cartel in Panama, smashing a coke lab, even reporting a $5 million bribe attempt. All this at a time when no other Latin leader was giving Washington much help in the war on drugs.

The icing on Noriega's defense cake was the appearance of a real, live, white-haired CIA analyst who met frequently with the general in the mid-'80s to trade info on Cuba, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. Donald Winters testified that Noriega, in fact, often traveled to Havana as an informal liaison between Castro and Washington. So useful was this information that CIA Director William Casey stopped by Panama for a briefing with the general in 1984. Winters blew a hole in the prosecution's claim that Noriega traveled to Havana that year just so Fidel could mediate a dispute between the Medellín cartel and the general. (This made even the CIA observer sit up and stop doing the crossword.)

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Miami argues that Noriega was a "crooked cop" working both sides of the street. To prove their case, the feds rounded up some of the sleaziest drug-dealing characters ever seen in an American courtroom. In return for cooperation, the government handed out reduced sentences, green cards for the families of dealers, aviation licenses for one-time drug pilots, and millions in cash. The DEA did an extraordinary job hunting down potential witnesses. Those who passed the audition and testified included:

- Floyd Carlton Caceres, jaunty pilot, operator of a Cessna distributorship in Panama, and Noriega's alleged connection to the Medellín cartel. DEA agents snatched Carlton in 1986 from Costa Rica, but he got his revenge by trouncing his government minders at games of Donkey Kong on a pocket computer all the way back to Miami. He says Noriega got upward of $1 million for four drug flights from Colombia to Panama.
- Luis del Cid, lardy lieutenant colonel in the PDF and Noriega's trusted gofer. He pled guilty to handing over hundreds of thousands of dollars in drug payoffs to Noriega, but during the trial he admitted he had never looked in the bags he delivered to his boss from Carlton. (Inmates at the Metropolitan Correctional Center outside Miami say he's so rattled by prison he spends his days constantly waxing floors.)
- Roberto Streidinger, Colombian rancher, who founded the Medellín cartel's drug "airline." The DEA searched the world for him and finally found him in Key Biscayne in a multimillion-dollar house used by "Miami Vice" film crews. Feds claim he controlled a majority of the white powder sold in the United States. Streidinger says he flew Noriega six French dancing girls as a gift.

No doubt the biggest fish to take the stand, however, was Carlos Lehder Rivas, once the most glamorous of Colombian traffickers, now languishing in jail. Dubbed the "Henry Ford" of the coke trade, he perfected the mass transportation of coke into the United States. In a wild-eyed interview from a jungle hideout, he once boasted that drugs would be the "Achilles heel of imperialism." He liked Hitler too.

Lehder seems somewhat more repentant now. Convicted of smuggling 3.3 tons of coke into the United States in 1988, he is serving life plus 135 years. In return for better prison digs and witness protection for his family, he took the stand to lay out the inner workings of "the roundtable," where four bosses and five traffickers did their daily business. Lehder claims Noriega made an easy $1 million a month protecting his cartel's shipments.

Trouble was, Lehder never met Noriega, and his information came from either uncorroborated discussions at roundtable meetings or from daily calls to the cartel's sophisticated communications room in Bogotá, where he talked to, uh, he couldn't quite remember. He did remember, however, that U.S. authorities gave him a "green light" to smuggle cocaine into the United States if he let them smuggle weapons to the contras through his Bahamanian island hideout. False, screamed the prosecution, thereby undercutting the credibility of their own witness. Judge Hoeveler cast even more doubt by suggesting Lehder be sent for a psychological exam after he claimed that the press secretary of then Vice President George Bush once sent him a letter via a Haitian CIA mole.

In the end, the government produced no smoking

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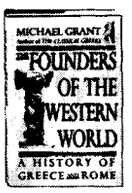

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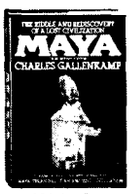

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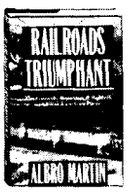

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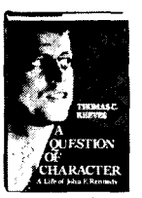

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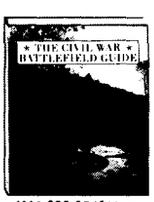

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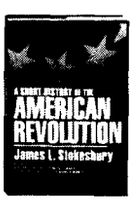

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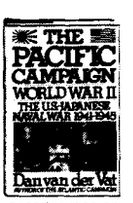

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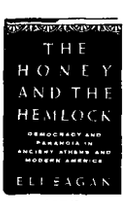

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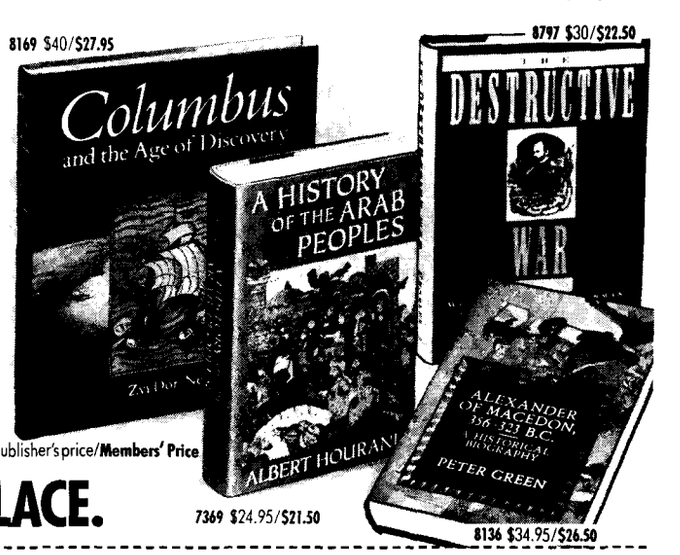

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gun. No one, for instance, seemed to know for sure if cartel money went to Noriega to protect drug trafficking. Noriega's personal banker, Amjad Awan, said he didn't even know if the $23 million he deposited in BCCI for Noriega included drug payoffs. Nor could any of the witnesses seem to agree about a $4 million to $5 million payoff by the cartel to protect a drug lab located in the Panamanian jungle, or about who ordered the PDF raid that destroyed it. "The evidence was spotty, circumstantial in the extreme, inconsistent, and speculative," complains D. Marvin Jones, professor of constitutional law at the University of Miami. So confident were his lawyers, Noriega didn't even take the stand in his own defense.

Noriega's fate will soon be in the hands of twelve Floridians. Can he beat the rap? Of the eleven original counts against him, one money-laundering count was dropped before the trial began, and Judge Hoeveler has questioned three others. After months of testimony, the drug trafficking case is looking more and more like a public corruption case. The question is, what's it doing in the U.S. courts? As Rubino grumped in a conference with the judge recently: "It's like the mayor of Miami Beach being indicted in Panama for taking bribes on the Beach." Judge Hoeveler's response is telling: "We do have problems in this case." You can hear his sigh rising off the page of the court transcript.

CATHY BOOTH is Miami bureau chief for *Time*.

Two plans that won't fix welfare.

DOLEDRUMS

By Michael Abramowitz

Every few years politicians discover that welfare causes poverty, and pledge to end the latter by reforming the former. They tinker with benefit levels or require work from welfare recipients, as if these measures alone will end welfare dependency. Today we're in the midst of the third wave of welfare reform in the last decade alone. In California, Republican Governor Pete Wilson has proposed a 25 percent cut in benefits. New Jersey's Democratic governor, Jim Florio, has signed legislation that would freeze benefits to mothers who have additional children while on government rolls. Other states are in hot pursuit with like-minded proposals. "We want to rebuild New Jersey's families and replace the hopelessness of welfare dependency with the hope of self-reliance," Florio said at a signing ceremony in January.

If that's the goal, the current reforms are likely to fall as far short as past plans. Although they are politically appealing and may help states cut their budgets, none of the plans is bold enough to bring about more than marginal improvements in underclass poverty. Most rely on anticipated changes in behavior that are notoriously difficult to predict, while they shrink from sweeping reforms—such as replacing welfare with mandatory workfare—that might make a real difference.

The California and New Jersey plans suffer from the same basic lack of vision. The New Jersey plan offers a conventional program of mandatory job training and basic education for welfare recipients, dressed up with some neoconservative bells and whistles. Its backers claim the plan will give undereducated, unskilled residents the tools to compete in a competitive labor market. In the short run, its architects acknowledge, it could actually cost the state more money. The California plan, by contrast, admits that its main goal is saving money. While Wilson has included some measures to make work more attractive to welfare recipients, his basic argument is that California can't afford its current level of benefits. His chief proposal is to slash them.

The political context of the new proposals is clear enough. Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the main state-federal welfare program, provides cash grants to families whose income is inadequate to meet their basic needs. The vast majority of AFDC recipients are single mothers with children, although both New Jersey and California offer benefits to intact families whose income drops below a certain level. Contrary to stereotypes, many families get off welfare in fairly short order, although there is a sizable core that remains for years on end.

Even in good times, AFDC is unpopular with voters. In recessionary times, it's in real trouble. With cash-strapped states looking for ways to hack their budgets, swelling welfare caseloads (2.3 million recipients in California, 400,000 in New Jersey) represent a ripe target. Last year forty states either froze or cut AFDC benefits. Given the political trouble Florio and Wilson face—largely because of raising taxes—it's not surprising that they have turned to welfare.

The real architect of the New Jersey plan is not Florio but Wayne Bryant, a black Democrat and former majority leader of the state Assembly. He represents Camden, New Jersey's poorest city, where three-fifths of the population is on some kind of public assistance. Bryant talks bluntly about the breakdown of the black family, in a way that many white liberal legislators avoid. He cites welfare a form of "slavery" that has subverted self reliance. "It is fundamentally a failure," he told me.

Bryant's proposed remedies have a commonsense appeal, such as his plan's provision to deny welfare mothers the additional $64 a month they now get when they have another child. Bryant argues that welfare recipients should be treated like people who work. "No one gets a raise for having a child," he says. Bryant's bill would also allow AFDC recipients to earn more income from work without losing benefits, and would eliminate the reduction in benefits that applies to married par-

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ents living together in the same home. Bryant would allow AFDC mothers to remarry without losing benefits for their children, even if the combined income of the new family was as much as $20,000 for a family of four.

As well-intentioned as this last proposal is, it highlights the paradoxes of the plan. While trying to keep families together, it also undermines the incentive to work for others at the margins of poverty. Is it fair to reward one family with benefits while another family with the same income struggles to get by without welfare? The plan also risks sending an unwitting message to single mothers that it's better to go on welfare before getting married. Bryant can't escape the law of unintended consequences that has confounded welfare experts for years.

Elsewhere, Bryant's plan is less than novel. He proposes a massive program of mandatory education and training in an effort to develop job skills. His plan mandates a 20 percent cut in benefits for those who refuse to participate. But there's nothing new about this. A similar proposal was at the heart of Congress's 1988 welfare reform act. That bill required states to set up mandatory training programs and a system of sanctions for nonparticipants. Even before Congress passed the bill, New Jersey had its own such program, as does California.

Bryant says the New Jersey version, known as REACH, has mistakenly stressed training for specific vocations over basic education, and he notes that many participants lack elementary math and reading skills. But some evidence suggests that training programs ought to stress tangible skills, as opposed to trying to reteach recipients what they should have learned in school. Even if Bryant is correct, it's hard to see how his plan will make much difference. The experience in New Jersey and elsewhere suggests that such mandatory education programs are often underfunded and have an all-too-modest impact.

Wilson does offer something more sweeping. No state has ever enacted the kind of cuts in AFDC that the governor is asking voters to approve in a ballot initiative. His Government Accountability and Taxpayer Protection Act of 1992 calls for an immediate 10 percent rollback, which means the income of a typical welfare family consisting of a mother and two small children would fall from $663 per month to $597. After another six months, any family with an "able-bodied adult" (and that includes these mothers with small children) would receive another 15 percent cut, down to $507 a month, as part of Wilson's pledge to make welfare a "transitional" program.

California's benefit levels are among the highest in the country, so it's hard to portray Wilson, as liberal critics try to do, as uniquely hard-hearted. Even with the cuts, the state's benefits would surpass New Jersey's.

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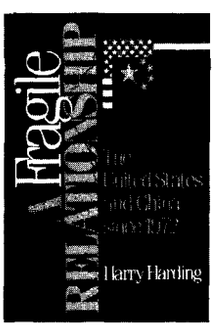

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Still, coupled with a previous 4.4 percent cut and the suspension of cost-of-living adjustments, the California plan could mean a reduction of almost 40 percent in the real value of welfare benefits by 1993, according to the Western Center on Law and Poverty. These cuts are probably the closest any state will come to testing the neoconservative theory that eliminating welfare would get the poor off their couches and into the job market.

Despite the obvious political motivation of his plan, Wilson does raise legitimate issues about the structure of welfare. One is his contention that AFDC offers little incentive for work. Under the present system, monthly grants are reduced on a dollar-for-dollar basis against earned income. There are allowances for work-related expenses like child care, so recipients can keep a small amount of income from, say, a part-time job without losing benefits. But in general, you'll come out behind if you go off welfare and take a minimum-wage job, according to a report by California's Legislative Analyst's Office. The central message of the California welfare system, as currently constituted, is: You're a chump if you try to work.

To undo this, Wilson must unreform some reforms dating from Reagan's presidency. The major concern of Reagan's welfare experts a decade ago was that welfare was going to those who weren't truly needy. So, as part of his first budget act as president, the government tried to purge the welfare rolls around the country of the working poor. Congress adopted the so-called "100-hour" rule: any family with an adult working more than 100 hours a month loses all benefits. The results were predictable: people work ninety-six hours a month and keep benefits.

Eliminating the 100-hour rule, which requires federal approval, is part of the grab bag of incentives Wilson is proposing. Welfare recipients would also be permitted to make up for the reductions in their grant levels by finding a part-time job, without the usual reductions. Wilson then throws in a few behavioral inducements. As in New Jersey, cash grants would no longer be increased for additional children born to mothers on welfare. And teenage parents on AFDC would get a $50 raise for attending high school. "This is not just about reducing the grant," says Russell Gould, Wilson's secretary of health and welfare. "It is far more about trying to encourage personal responsibility."

The question is: Will any of these changes make a sizable or permanent dent in underclass poverty? The real "work incentive" in Wilson's proposal is: if you don't work, you'll suffer an immediate and drastic decline in your standard of living. But work may not be an option in California, where unemployment is now 8.7 percent, 1.4 points above the national average. If people with college educations can't find jobs, it's hard to see how Wilson expects poorly educated welfare mothers to get work.

And there'll remain a hard-core underclass that won't avail itself of jobs no matter how well-off the economy is. That's why there's an underclass, after all. Wilson has little to say about how to make this group a productive part of society. He's too much of a traditional conservative to subscribe to a government jobs program, and he's held back on one promising idea—California's own workfare program known as GAIN, or Greater Avenues for Independence. One of the first state programs requiring AFDC recipients to get education or job training, GAIN was once hailed as the great liberal-conservative synthesis on welfare. But it's been starved for cash in recent years, another casualty of budget blues. Less than 50,000 welfare mothers are enrolled in this ostensibly "mandatory" program, and county welfare directors report long waiting lists for entry. Wilson's new budget would keep GAIN spending static.

This is one of the great ironies of welfare reform: interest in it rises mostly when budgets are tight, so bold steps to remedy the problem—major job training, expanding the earned income tax credit, government workfare programs—are seen as too costly. So are other important initiatives that could help the "undeserving poor" get off their duffs. Without affordable child and health care, all the incentives in the world will do little to make work attractive to people on welfare. Tinkering with carrots and sticks can promote only modest improvements in the self-destructive lifestyles that have ripped apart the inner cities. California may save a few bucks if it passes its Taxpayer Protection Act. But unless states get more radical with expensive workfare schemes and drastic inducements to leave welfare rolls, the new wave of welfare reform is likely to be as disappointing as the last.

MICHAEL ABRAMOWITZ is a Chicago-based writer for *The Washington Post.*

The post-Dahmer insanity defense.

NOT SO NUTTY

By Lincoln Caplan

The insanity defense has a paradoxical importance in the law. By choosing not to hold someone criminally responsible for an illegal act he commits because, as a result of a mental disease or defect, he can't control himself or tell right from wrong, our society indirectly affirms the accountability of the sane. In a sense, the insanity defense gives criminal law its moral authority.

Yet the insanity defense also raises basic questions about the bounds of responsibility that cannot be scientifically established. Since the mid-nineteenth century, insanity pleas have triggered passionate debate about who should be considered bad and who mad. Because

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of the violence that celebrated defendants have done and the woolliness of some psychiatric evaluations given about them, the defense has been fervently criticized.

That happened again recently when a Milwaukee jury considered acquitting Jeffrey Dahmer on grounds of insanity, before his trial ended in a verdict of guilty on fifteen counts of murder. Focusing on the sensational, the media raised the prospect of a cannibal being let off because of a legal loophole. The precedent usually cited was the case of John W. Hinckley Jr., the would-be assassin of President Ronald Reagan, who a decade ago was found not guilty by reason of insanity. The media often left out any account of how the insanity defense actually works in practice today and, as happened during the Hinckley trial, treated it as a cause and a symbol of various social ills. In reality, the unpopular Hinckley verdict helped weaken the insanity defense considerably. Still, it is a defense we would do well to retain.

In the generation and a half before 1982, American insanity laws were widely reformed, with standards broadened to take account of lessons from psychiatry. The most expansive reform, adopted in Washington, D.C., which was a laboratory for the defense, was called the "product" test. It said that an "accused is not criminally responsible if his unlawful conduct was the product of mental disease or mental defect." It was reviewed and rejected by thirty state and five federal courts, and put into law by only two state legislatures.

A majority of states adopted an American Law Institute test that was seen as a moderate solution. It said that a man is not responsible if, because of a mental disease or defect, he "lacks substantial capacity to *appreciate* the wrongfulness of his conduct or to conform his conduct to the requirements of the law" (my italics). As a result, a defendant who knew right from wrong, but lacked emotional appreciation of the difference because his thinking was severely disordered, could be acquitted. The ALI test also broadened the notion that insanity could be a defense for a person if he could tell right from wrong but lost self-control to an "irresistible impulse."

Legal reforms also sought to protect insanity acquittees from being consigned indefinitely to institutions that were worse than prisons, as they had been regularly since the nineteenth century, often for years after they were no longer dangerous to themselves or society. Changes in practices of psychiatry accompanied those in the law, as drug therapy and community care replaced long-term hospitalization in treating the mentally ill. All of these changes amounted to efforts to address the interests of insanity acquittees as well as those of society. Before the Hinckley verdict, Alan Stone of Harvard University observed, "Perhaps for the first time in history, a successful plea of insanity has real bite."

But from the day after the Hinckley acquittal, this judgment became largely moot. Key parts of the insanity defense were significantly altered and, often, limited throughout the country. A new federal insanity defense excluded the notion of insanity for a person who knew right from wrong but lost self-control. (Its practical effect, though, was minimal since only a tiny number of federal defendants pled insanity anyway.)

Thirty-eight states reformed their laws. Eight states adopted a new insanity test, seven of them a narrower one. With these changes, a majority of states now use the old-fashioned "can't tell right from wrong" test of insanity. Eight states added a plea called "guilty but mentally ill" to their criminal laws, to reduce the number of insanity acquittals. Sixteen states shifted the burden of proof in insanity cases, twelve to the defendant. The most common reforms, in twenty-five states, addressed the issue of widest concern: how insanity acquittees are dealt with after trial. All but one state made it easier to commit them immediately to custody, and harder for them to gain release.

In 1983 the U.S. Supreme Court approved and encouraged this reversal of direction in the insanity defense. It ruled that a "successful" defendant can be held much longer than he would have been if convicted (in this case, a year for attempted shoplifting). The Court found that any insanity acquittal is proof of dangerousness and that therefore acquittees are decidedly different from others cleared of criminal charges. As a note in the *Harvard Law Review* stated, the Court judged that "a person who commits a crime is either responsible enough to deserve punishment, or insane enough to deserve commitment." Insanity acquittees were placed in a class of their own—not responsible, yet not beyond blame. The Court's obdurate stand seemed to have broad support.

The protest over the Hinckley verdict was based on misconceptions. The primary one was that cracking down on the insanity defense would significantly increase public safety, and shift the balance between what then Attorney General William French Smith called "the forces of law and the forces of lawlessness." There should now be no doubt that this premise was wrong. The rare occasions on which the insanity defense was used—and the rarer occasions on which it was successful—had a negligible impact on broader public safety. The most comprehensive insanity study ever, conducted by Policy Research Associates under the direction of Henry Steadman and reported on in the *Bulletin of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law* last year, showed that in eight states between 1976 and 1987, the defense was used in less than 1 percent of all criminal cases, and that it succeeded in only about one-quarter of those. Only 7 percent of the acquittals came after contested jury trials. The idea that the insanity defense represents a major threat to public order is simply wrong.

Moreover, the vast majority of insanity defendants are not in the Hinckley-Dahmer category. Only 14 percent of insanity pleas—and 15 percent of the acquittals—in the eight-state study involved murder. Half the pleas involved violent offenses, accounting for 65 percent of the acquittals. The other half of the pleas and 35 percent of the acquittals involved non-violent offenses. Whatever the offenses, probably 90 percent of insanity

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acquittees spend time in custody after they are judged not guilty. Of those charged with murder, the figure climbs to almost 100 percent. The fact that, on average, they spend somewhat less time there than if they had been convicted of the crimes they were charged with is counterbalanced by the predictability of their commitment. By contrast, in every state each year some people convicted of murder go free. And with the Supreme Court's approval, some acquittees spend much longer in custody than they would have if they had been convicted.

In a forthcoming book called *Rush to Reform in the Post-Hinckley Era*, Steadman and colleagues hold that the states that do the most effective job are the ones that retain the insanity defense and seek a balance between protecting the civil liberties of acquittees and maintaining the safeguards of society, through careful procedures for commitment and for release.

Wisconsin, where Dahmer was tried, fits the Steadman model. The state didn't weaken its insanity defense after the Hinckley verdict. Still, if Dahmer's defense had succeeded, he would have been placed immediately in custody under the jurisdiction of the criminal court. He would have had chances to prove he was no longer dangerous to himself or society, and that he should be set free, but would have borne the burden of making those proofs. Wisconsin has one of the more liberal approaches to the release of people acquitted by reason of insanity, according to Ingo Keilitz of the National Center for State Courts, and it's fairly restrictive. Dahmer almost certainly would have been kept in custody for life.

It's fashionable to argue that Americans now take less responsibility for their actions than they once did. Insanity defendants are sometimes portrayed as emblematic of the trend, because they are seen as seeking an undeserved dodge. Some critics contend that psychiatry, through the definition of new, expansive mental syndromes and their broad application by experts for hire, makes the problem worse, by excusing behavior it shouldn't.

But the eight-state study dealt directly with that issue. It found that "the vast majority of people who used the insanity defense were seriously mentally ill." Among insanity defendants, 62 percent were diagnosed as suffering from schizophrenia, from some other major mental illness, or from mental retardation, and 72 percent had been hospitalized once or more. Among insanity acquittees, the percentages were 89 and 82. The insanity defense shouldn't be misconstrued as an easy out and falsely blamed for crime, irresponsibility, or other social ills.

When it is made a scapegoat, bad policy can result. That happened in states that adopted the guilty-but-mentally-ill verdict. To the National Center for State Courts, it brought "little change in the manner in which the criminal justice and the mental health systems handle mentally disordered defendants." However, those imprisoned because of it tend to be put away for much longer than those found guilty, and seem to be singled out for unusually harsh punishment. As for abolishing the insanity defense altogether, Steadman and his colleagues report that abolition in Montana didn't make the problem go away. The state still had to deal with defendants who would have pled insanity, usually at hearings where their lawyers argued they were incompetent to stand trial. And it still had to treat them in state facilities.

The insanity defense retains its theoretical place in the law as well as its practical value. The existence of the defense and the very rare cases in which it prevails indicate that American law has kept a traditional, if limited, measure of consistency. The defense isn't likely to gain many vocal supporters, especially when proponents of law and order dominate debate about criminal law, as they have in this country for a generation. But those who claim to seek order in law ought to be among its supporters. In a system rooted in the idea of individual responsibility, the narrow exception of the insanity defense—it is now unquestionably that—strengthens the fundamental rule.

LINCOLN CAPLAN, a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, is the author of *The Insanity Defense and the Trial of John W. Hinckley, Jr.* (Dell/Laurel).

The New Right and Buchanan.

HEIR APPARENT

By Fred Barnes

David Keene, the chairman of the American Conservative Union, should have known something was up. When he asked Tom Huston, an Indiana attorney and former Nixon White House aide, to introduce Vice President Dan Quayle at the Conservative Political Action Conference on February 21, Keene was curtly rebuffed. Huston said he couldn't bring himself to introduce anybody connected with the Bush administration.

Huston didn't stop there. At the annual meeting of the ACU's board of directors, held during the conference, Huston made a passionate pitch for an ACU endorsement of Patrick Buchanan, even though the Republican presidential race wasn't on the agenda. "How do we get off *not* supporting him?" he pleaded. Huston instantly swayed Donald Devine, who ran the Office of Personnel Management in President Reagan's first term. Devine said he was "embarrassed" by his earlier reluctance to back Buchanan. As an alternative to endorsement, Keene suggested a resolution praising Buchanan for pulling President Bush to the right. No way, said Tom Winter, publisher of *Human Events*, the conservative tabloid. "The only acceptable words are 'we

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endorse.'" Jeffrey Bell, a former campaign strategist for Reagan and Jack Kemp, spoke up for Bush. This was too much for Keene, who opposed a Buchanan endorsement but isn't pro-Bush. "I separate myself from my ally," he said. After an hour's debate, a vote was taken: 11-2 for Buchanan, with Bell and Keene dissenting.

The ACU endorsement in itself wasn't terribly significant, but the fight over it was. That squabble was a preview of fierce, acrimonious battles to come among conservatives, all sparked by Buchanan. His emergence as a major figure on the right, maybe *the* major figure, has divided conservatives in a way that even Reagan's challenge to President Ford in 1976 never did. The difference is that practically all conservatives revered Reagan, though many stuck with Ford out of loyalty to an incumbent Republican president. In Buchanan's case, many conservatives disagree sharply, and irrevocably, with his views, and don't like him personally either. Many regard him as a menace, a heretic, a dark force, and he believes roughly the same about them. The right hasn't been this divided since modern conservatism was born in the 1950s.

When Buchanan announced his presidential bid last December 10, conservatives split into three camps. One group, including neoconservatives and those plotting presidential races themselves in 1996, stuck with Bush. Former drug czar Bill Bennett and TV evangelist Pat Robertson are in this camp. Another group balked at endorsing Buchanan but is privately cheering his attacks on Bush. It includes folks at the Heritage Foundation and Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council. The third camp openly supports Buchanan for the 1992 Republican nomination. New Right leaders Howard Phillips and Richard Viguerie, *Human Events* editor Allan Ryskind, and an oddball band of paleoconservatives have joined Buchanan's brigade.

There are more subtle rifts as well. "I see two different kinds of conservatives," says William Pascoe, a Republican consultant who worked for Bush in 1988 but now backs Buchanan. "The inside-the-Beltway conservative establishment is against Pat. One reason is ideological. They don't agree with him. Another reason is political power. Who's going to define the conservative movement? They want to define it, not Pat" or Pat's allies outside the Beltway. Buchanan's candidacy has separated leaders from followers. After days of prayer, Robertson endorsed Bush for re-election in December 1990, and now plugs him regularly on "The 700 Club," his TV program, and in speeches. His Christian Coalition, run by Ralph Reed, is also strongly pro-Bush. But when Robertson conducted a poll during his television show on February 17, Buchanan won 71 percent to 29 percent.

For opponents of Buchanan, the most ominous split is generational. Conservative leaders in Washington who are leery of Buchanan have discovered their young aides and interns are often fervently pro-Buchanan. Buchanan has recruited a legion of young conservative activists to his campaign, people like 29-year-old pollster Frank Luntz, an Oxford-educated political scientist. "Reagan grabbed a couple of generations of political activists, including me, and shaped our conservatism," says Republican Representative Vin Weber of Minnesota. Now Buchanan is doing the same with a new generation.

This alone ensures that bitter fights, pro-Buchanan vs. anti-Buchanan, will persist after the election. But there's another reason too. My assumption is the Buchanan candidacy will continue through the California primary on June 2. Having stumped coast to coast, Buchanan will have put together a national political network that no other conservative, even Robertson, can match. Bell thinks Buchanan will have amassed a lucrative mailing list of as many as 250,000 supporters—a bigger list than Reagan had after his 1976 race. Many conservatives will "look to Pat for guidance," says Keene, "and there's going to be the presumption he's right. That gives him intellectual and political high ground he can dictate from." Tony Fabrizio, a Republican strategist who quit the Buchanan campaign in January, says Buchanan "will be in a position, postelection, to set the agenda of issues conservatism addresses."

Unlike post-1976 Reagan, however, Buchanan won't be the undisputed leader of the conservative movement. "Pat will have to figure out how to get leading conservatives to say he's our leader," says Bill Bennett. "Is Bill Buckley going to say that? Vin Weber? Jack Kemp? Me?" The answer is no. Both neoconservatives (Bennett, Irving Kristol) and neo-Reaganites (Kemp, Weber, Quayle) are girding to challenge him. Other conservatives such as Phil Truluck of the Heritage Foundation and John O'Sullivan, editor of *National Review*, believe Buchanan is a force for good but must be dragged back to the conservative orthodoxy on internationalism, free trade, and open immigration. And all this is bound to produce bitter debates and noisy clashes.

The breach between Buchanan and the neocons is long-standing and unbridgeable. In 1981 he opposed Bennett's nomination as chairman of the National Endowment of the Humanities and dismissed neocons as "eleventh-hour arrivals in the Reagan coalition ... JFK-LBJ Democrats disillusioned with the Great Society they helped erect." That turned out to be one of the kinder things Buchanan has said about them. In 1991 he assaulted them again in a column: "Like the fleas who conclude they are steering the dog, their relationship to the movement has always been parasitical." Neocons hog leadership positions and right-wing money, he wrote, but they aren't "true conservatives." This prompted Robert Bartley, editorial page editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, to comment at a Washington banquet last December: "Pat's not running against Bush. He's running against Irving Kristol."

Bennett called to complain about the neocon column. The two had become friends as Reagan administration officials and fellow graduates of Gonzaga High in Washington. Bennett also had spoken at two fund-

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raisers for Pat's sister, Bay, who ran unsuccessfully for California treasurer in 1990. She is now Pat's campaign manager. "Pat, what the hell is this?" Bennett asked. According to Bennett, Buchanan said the criticism wasn't meant personally. But you mentioned my name twice in the column, Bennett protested. Well, said Buchanan, conservatives have to take their movement back. End of conversation; end of friendship.

Now Bennett is Buchanan's most scathing critic. "If Pat prevails in taking over the leadership of conservatism—and that's what he wants—that would be disastrous," Bennett says. Buchanan represents "the dark side, conservatism in retreat, not the city on the hill but the fortress with a moat, drawbridge up." Bennett says Buchanan is a phony, rebelling against Bush after having worked for and remained loyal to a far less conservative GOP president, Richard Nixon. "The Trickster's OK, Bush isn't? That's crazy." Bennett's attacks don't sit well with some conservatives. New Right leader Paul Weyrich confronted Bennett at a private meeting and jabbed his finger at Bennett's chest. "You have no right to criticize Buchanan," Weyrich said, because you weren't willing to run against Bush. "Bill looked sheepish," said a conservative leader who saw the encounter.

What infuriates neo-Reaganites is Buchanan's claim to represent the "legacy of Reagan." In truth, Buchanan contradicts the three pillars of Reagan Republicanism, Weber insists. "First, we're the internationalist party and Pat explicitly rejects that. Second, we're the party of entrepreneurial capitalism. Pat's almost as out of step on this. He talks about 'vulture capitalists,' favors tax cuts but doesn't relate them to economic growth and entrepreneurial activity, and is a protectionist. He doesn't embrace the essence of Reaganism on economic policy." Third, on social policy, "Reagan created a consensus on values" that Buchanan would shatter. "Our greatest allies in that fight are neoconservative intellectuals and black and other minority activists who are willing to criticize within their communities. If the leader of the conservative movement presents himself in such a way that he revives the image of conservatism as riddled with bigotry, he's going to lose those indispensable allies. And you end up losing the cultural battle if you allow conservatism to become what its critics said it was."

Kemp delivered the neo-Reaganite case against Buchanan to the conservative conference on February 21. (In a straw poll, the conference backed Buchanan 54 percent to 40 percent.) Reagan's conservatism, Kemp argued, was "optimistic, inclusive, and ready for change," adjectives that don't apply to Buchananism. Would Reagan have "stepped back from the threat of a Saddam Hussein?" asked Kemp. "No! He would have drawn a line in the sand just as President Bush did." Buchanan opposed the Persian Gulf war. Reagan was a free trader, not a "trade hawk" (as Buchanan calls himself). As for the Buchanan camp, "They're not hawks. They're doves. They're economic pacifists who want to retreat from the global marketplace." Kemp's tone was generous compared with Buchanan's in a speech to the conservatives the day before. Kemp didn't mention Buchanan by name. Buchanan was angry and downbeat, sneering at Bush, Kemp, Supreme Court Justice David Souter, and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft.

There's one branch of conservatism where Buchanan may find a flock of new followers—the Christian right. Jerry Falwell is backing Bush this year, but says he's "front-row center for Buchanan in 1996." Paul Erickson, Buchanan's political director, says "half of our Southern organization is old Robertson people." That's not surprising, says Fabrizio, since Buchanan's message "isn't economic, it's religious. It appeals to ethnic Catholics and Robertson people." Buchanan might have captured the religious right this year, except for one thing. Bush's unwavering opposition to abortion kept most Christian conservatives on his side. Had Bush waffled on abortion, "he'd be dead" with the religious right and the pro-family movement, says Bauer.

Christian activists, however, have plenty of grievances against Bush. Their pleas to Bush to fire John Frohnmeyer as chairman of the National Endowment of the Arts were ignored until Buchanan took up the matter. Southern Baptists were furious when gay rights leaders were invited to the White House twice for bill-signing ceremonies. Their anger increased when Robert Mosbacher, chairman of Bush's re-election campaign, conferred in February with leaders of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. That was "a direct contradiction to your attempts to portray your administration as pro-family," said Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, in a letter to Bush. Disavowing "the homosexual civil rights agenda" is "your only hope in restoring trust on this issue," Chapman said. Bush didn't comply, but the White House soon began courting Chapman aggressively. Bush aide Lee Ann Metzger took Chapman and his wife to breakfast in the White House mess.

The worst fear of anti-Buchanan conservatives is not that Buchanan undermines Bush's re-election, but that he'll succeed in reshaping conservatism. This isn't as farfetched as it sounds in a movement that is still, in its modern form, a mere three decades old. The Buchanan camp is unequivocal about its leader's role. "It's not only that he'll be *the* conservative leader," says Erickson, "but he's redefining what conservatism is. How Buchanan changes, so will change the face of conservatism in the Republican Party."

Right-wing protectionists are already ecstatic, sensing a shift away from free trade. Weyrich, for example, recently appeared with a gaggle of Buchananites at a protectionist press conference. "I wouldn't have said [right-wing] protectionists were important a few months ago," says Bell. "But now they have a vehicle. They're allied with the guy who'll have 250,000 names. This is a big win for them." And a loss for conservatism as we've come to know it. •

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The GOP rediscovers protectionism.

THE TARIFF PARTY

By John B. Judis

Pat Buchanan is running for president as a conservative alternative to George Bush, but he is also challenging conservatives and conservative orthodoxy on one important issue: free trade. Although Buchanan now describes himself as a "trade hawk" rather than a protectionist, he favors shielding American industries threatened by low-wage imports. "We just can't let foreign imports come in here and rob us of American jobs," Buchanan declared in a speech last month. His apostasy reflects a growing rift among Washington conservatives, and between them and their traditional business supporters in the hinterlands. In the long run, it could prove far more damaging to the movement's unity and coherence than any differences about taxes, abortion, or Israel.

Republicans and conservatives have not always been free traders. As the party of American manufacturers, the Whigs and then the Republicans favored a tariff through the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth as a way to protect what Hamilton called "infant industries" from their more powerful British competitors. After World War II, they advocated insulating older industries such as shoes and textiles from low-wage competition from southern Europe, Latin America, and Asia. As late as 1962 Republican Senator Prescott Bush, the father of the president, joined a small group of Republicans in opposing the anti-tariff Trade Expansion Act, warning that it would "disemploy perhaps hundreds of thousands of American workers."

But during the 1950s a new generation of conservatives abandoned the tariff. Like their liberal counterparts, the new conservatives were moved by a realization that American industry was producing better goods at a lower cost than its rivals and stood to benefit from the removal of trade barriers. Conservatives also reasoned that if government intervention was bad for the domestic economy, it was also bad for the international economy. In his classic work *Capitalism and Freedom* (1956), Milton Friedman advocated that the United States "move to free trade unilaterally, as Britain did in the nineteenth century when it repealed the Corn Laws."

Friedman's free trade philosophy became de rigueur among conservative intellectuals, dominating the editorial policy of *National Review* and *Human Events* and the analyses of the Heritage Foundation and American Enterprise Institute. But just when a new consensus seemed to have been reached, it began to erode. The first major dissenters were conservative industrialists whose businesses suffered from cheap imports.

No businessman was more important to funding the conservative movement than Roger Milliken, the chairman of the South Carolina-based Milliken & Co., one of the country's most successful textile firms. Milliken and his family provided vital seed money for *National Review* and the Heritage Foundation; he was a key backer of Strom Thurmond, Barry Goldwater, Ronald Reagan, Newt Gingrich, and Jack Kemp. But in the early '70s, as American textiles were battered by imports, Milliken lobbied vigorously for the United States to back the multifiber agreements limiting textile imports. Then, in the early '80s, he backed legislation to limit further the growth of textile imports. Milliken gained the support of Thurmond and of North Carolina's two conservative senators, Jesse Helms and John East. But Milliken and the senators' backing of textile quotas did not appear to threaten conservative free trade philosophy; like Helms's backing for tobacco price supports, it represented merely the intrusion of base interest into the pristine realm of ideology.

In 1983, however, conservative political scientist Paul Seabury, writing in the *Journal of Contemporary Studies*, called for government action to protect the nation's industrial base—"the strategic core of free-world defenses"—from being decimated by imports. The next year William Hawkins, a young conservative economist, made a similar argument in *National Review*. He called for a "neo-mercantilist" strategy to protect basic industry.

Like Seabury, Hawkins was worried about maintaining America's military leadership; but he also argued that conservatives should be concerned about the growing unemployment created by the trade deficit. "Conservatives often exhibit a callousness toward labor that would have caused even Ricardo to blush," Hawkins wrote. He characterized himself as a follower of Hamilton's strategy of using government to create "an environment within which Americans would attain economic success."

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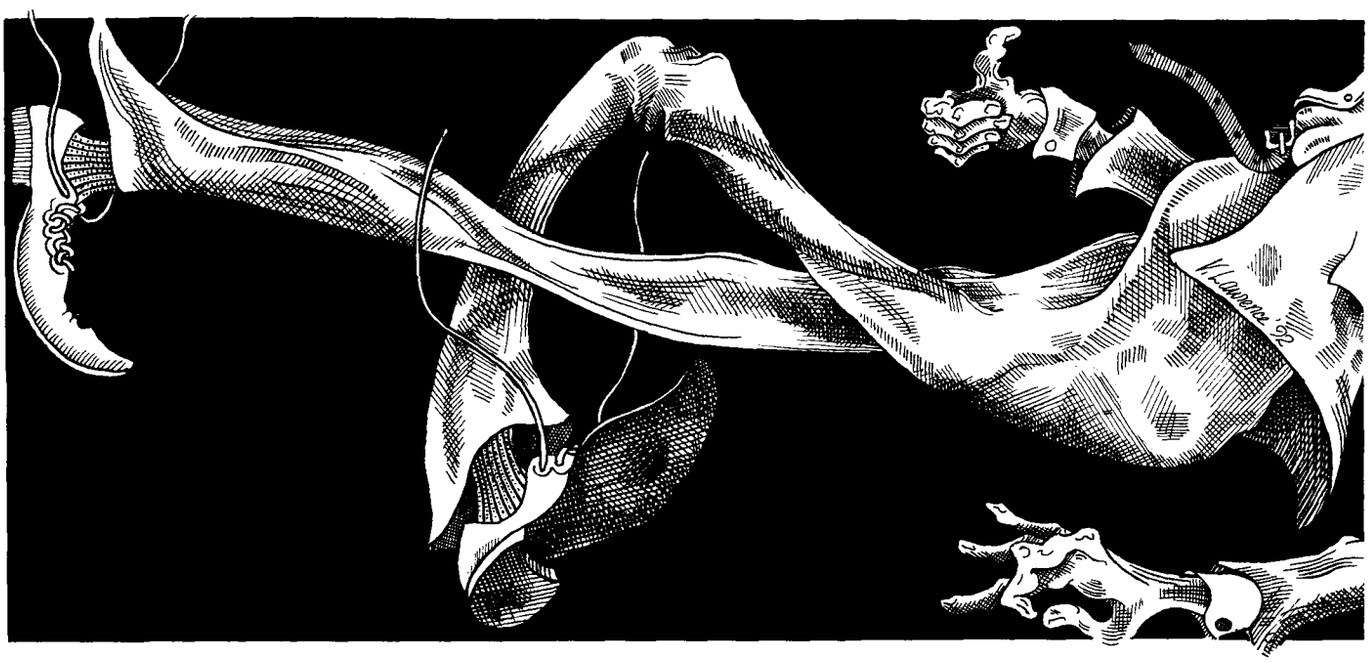
In an angry rebuttal in *National Review*, Friedman dismissed Hawkins as a "socialist." But on Capitol Hill Hawkins's manifesto got a warm response from East, who had been searching for an ideological justification for his textile vote. East arranged for Hawkins to meet Anthony Harrigan, the president of the Business and Industrial Council, an old-right group founded in 1933 to fight the New Deal. Harrigan's group represented about a thousand CEOs of small- and medium-sized businesses. Its specialty had been bashing labor and labor-backed legislation, but as its members, including Milliken, had begun to complain about imports, Harrigan had begun to rethink its focus. After meeting with East and Hawkins, Harrigan recruited the young economist as the group's intellectual, and together they authored articles and books making the case against free trade. The new anti-free trade conservatism now had an organization and an ideology.

icles' geopolitics but found common cause with the journal's nativism. Writing in *America's Economic Pre-Eminence*, Harrigan and Hawkins linked restraints on imports to restrictions on immigration. "Not only must steps be taken to halt illegal immigration," they wrote, "but legal immigration should encourage newcomers from the areas most compatible with the United States," meaning "immigrants from the European continent and British Isles." In a vision reminiscent of the 1920s right, Harrigan and Hawkins equated their opposition to imports and immigrants with a defense of "Western civilization."

Meanwhile, at the Business and Industrial Council, Harrigan and John Cregan, a former aide to Representative John Ashbrook, looked left for allies. They worked in alliance with the AFL-CIO in a Committee to Support U.S. Trade Laws, a coalition fighting attempts by multinationals to weaken American anti-dumping



Meanwhile, the revolt of the conservative businessmen gathered force. In 1984 Milliken, smarting from Heritage's rejection of Congress's plan to limit textile imports, quit as a contributor to the think tank. That year steel executives also withdrew their contributions when Heritage refused to support a five-year quota on steel imports. One executive from U.S. Steel even tore up a $5,000 check in Heritage Vice President John Von Cannon's face. In 1984 alone, Von Cannon estimates, Heritage lost about $200,000 in contributions from its refusal to change its free trade stance.

The free trade critics began to look for allies both inside and outside the conservative movement. Harrigan won support from the paleoconservatives at *Chronicles*, who were engaged in their own pitched battle with the neoconservatives over immigration, Israel, and the welfare state. In January 1990 *Chronicles* devoted an entire issue to "economic nationalism," featuring polemics by Hawkins and Harrigan. The Business and Industrial Council steered clear of *Chron-*

statutes. Both men saw a political realignment taking place. "My own view is that the real division in the future will not be between conservatives and liberals, but between nationalists and internationalists," Harrigan explained in an interview two years ago.

When the Economic Strategy Institute, former Reagan Commerce Department official Clyde Prestowitz's new think tank, opened last year Milliken moved his Washington office out of the Heritage building, sublet space from ESI, and contributed hundreds of thousands to its budget. Funded by both labor and business and with Democrats as well as Republicans on its staff, ESI has challenged the administration's laissez-faire trade and investment policies. During the New Hampshire primary, the think tank ran non-partisan television ads warning voters that the United States was exchanging its potato chips for Japanese semiconductor chips.

The new conservative split over trade also gained momentum in Congress. The Carolina caucus found

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new allies among such conservative Republicans as Helen Bentley, Duncan Hunter, and Don Ritter. Together, they regularly joined pro-labor Democrats in backing limits on steel and textile imports; they led the fight against the Bush administration's plan for American and Japanese companies to produce the FSX airplane jointly; and they supported restrictions on foreign lobbying. Their defection prompted Vin Weber to complain in Heritage's magazine *Policy Review* that "some of my best friends in the conservative movement have been seduced by economic nationalism." But the most important convert to the new position was Buchanan.

Through 1987, when he left the Reagan White House, Buchanan was an ardent free trader. That year he rejected a request by Milliken that he use his influence to sway the administration on textile quotas. But Buchanan was enraged by the growing scandal over

influence-peddling in Washington, which climaxed in the 1987-88 Toshiba case. When the Japanese company, along with a Norwegian company, was discovered to have secretly sold submarine parts to the Soviet Union, the Senate immediately passed stiff sanctions against Toshiba. But a year later, after an army of Toshiba lobbyists had descended on Capitol Hill, Congress gutted the original sanctions.

Buchanan, prodded by Harrigan, Cregan, and Milliken, moved from the threat of foreign lobbying to the threat of foreign imports. By 1991, when he wrote the foreword to a council book, *America Asleep*, Buchanan was openly defending what he called a "protectionist" strategy. "One day soon, the reality of Uncle Sam impoverishing himself to defend rich nations as they capture our markets and plan and prepare for the trade wars of the twenty-first century will come home to Americans," Buchanan warned.

But although Buchanan's sympathies are now clear, he has not developed a real trade strategy. Asked for specifics in an extensive interview by *Human Events* editors Allan Ryskind and M. Stanton Evans, Buchanan replied, "I don't know exactly what our policy should be." Pressed further, he railed predictably against the United States "propping up Socialist and Third World governments all over the planet with ... $300 million in foreign aid."

The conservative free trade critics were among the first to back Buchanan's presidential candidacy. Milliken and his family members have given the maximum $1,000 contributions, and Cregan, who succeeded Harrigan in June 1990 as president of the Business and Industrial Council, has served as a campaign spokesman and adviser. Although the council cannot endorse candidates, several board members have raised funds for Buchanan. New recruits have also joined the cause. At Heritage, Grover Coors, the son of Joseph Coors, who contributed $250,000 to get the think tank going in 1974, has come to reject its free trade stance. In fall 1990 Coors, who took over his father's seat on Heritage's Board of Trustees, organized a discussion between the think tank's laissez-faire economists and trade critics, including Prestowitz and Cregan. Coors calls the trade debate "an enormous issue, perhaps the issue of the '92 campaign." "I've seen it coming like a freight train. Nothing surprises me more than the surprise of conservatives at this issue."

Indeed, some conservatives at Heritage do believe that the trade issue will fade after the primary. But it is not likely this will occur. In the nineteenth century, when the United States had difficulty holding its own against imports, no issue except for slavery was as important to American politics. Now, as American producers are once again threatened, the issue has reemerged among both liberals and conservatives. Buchanan's campaign is not the end of the debate, but the beginning. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Late Winter Roundup

Under Suspicion (Columbia). All that most of us know about Brighton, since Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*, is that crime happens there. It happens there again, in the late 1950s, in this English thriller written and directed by Simon Moore. A nicely sordid job he does, too, in his first feature film (after writing for TV and theater). As with most thrillers, even the best, we can see holes in the plot, but as with the best, we don't see them until the film is finished.

The camera work by Vernon Layton is a touch muddy, and the editing by Tariq Anwar will not win this year's Subtlety Award. (The intercutting between an impending death and the person speeding to the rescue is straight Saturday-afternoon-serial.) But the basic gimmick has an intriguing twist that breeds further twists so profusely that we expect still another twist under the closing credits.

There's a Hitchcockian premise: a man is accused of a crime, and only the audience thinks him innocent. Liam Neeson plays a grungy detective who arranges for divorcing husbands to be photographed in hotel beds with women, thus supplying evidence for the wife's suit. (This collusive practice, illegal then, is outmoded now, I think, under the altered English divorce laws.) Laura San Giacomo plays the American mistress of a famous artist who engages Neeson to provide divorce evidence and who lives—if that's the word—to regret it.

Neeson is sufficiently granitic in approved private-eye style. San Giacomo, though not quite at ease in the high-fashion clothes she must wear, is sulkily sexy. And Kenneth Cranham is what he's supposed to be—reliable—as a police inspector friend of Neeson's. All in all, pleasantly unpleasant.

The Mambo Kings (Warner Bros.). Armand Assante is an American asset and an American problem. He is one of our strongest film actors (remember his drug lord in *Q&A*), but he hasn't yet found the film means to claim his proper place. His role in this picture was probably seen by him and by others as the chance of a lifetime. It isn't: it's merely the biggest part he has had.

Assante plays a Cuban musician who, with his younger brother, also a musician, comes to New York in 1952 hoping for success in the Cuban music business. Brother writes music and performs; Assante manages and performs. Every threadbare cliché of show-biz struggle—backstage romance, crooked club owners, ascent, setback, and so on—is hauled forth again, this time set to mambo rhythms. The source of the screenplay was a well-regarded novel by Oscar Hijuelos (unread by me), of which the film is said to use only the first half. Thank heaven. More would have been less.

Moment by moment Assante tries to find a truthful means of doing what he has in hand. But he has to struggle with so many hackneyed situations, so much weary dialogue, that he is swamped. His performance depends on the early establishment of some credible relationships; they don't happen, and he has no ground on which to walk.

Arne Glimcher, who directed, is the owner of a New York art gallery. When Lionel Barrymore did his disastrous production of *Macbeth* on Broadway in 1921, a chief backer of the show was a department-store owner. At the premiere, after the first-act curtain, a friend whispered in the backer's ear, "Keep the store open nights." Don't close the gallery, Mr. Glimcher.

American Me (Universal). Films about the L.A. ghettos, Hispanic and black, are not in short supply. *Colors* and *Boyz N the Hood* are only two of the genre. This newest of the line is Hispanic and begins with the Zoot Suit riot of 1943, about which there has already been a film (called *Zoot Suit*, in fact), made in 1981, with Edward James Olmos, who wrote and directed and plays the leading role in the new picture.

Adverse comment on a picture that deals with pressing problems—*American Me* is set mostly in the present—can seem to be slighting the problems; but Olmos himself seems merely to be exploiting those problems here, adding not one iota of fact or insight to what has been available in previous pictures. His film is one more story of boys being led by ghetto conditions into drugs and crime, of gangs as the only available validation of self, of consequent prison, of crime in prison. And there is a counterpoint of encounters with women, who serve as builders and testers of machismo.

In bygone days, well-known Japanese legends were treated often by different Japanese film directors. If one spoke of

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Daughters of the Dust. *Julie Dash, a black writer-director, makes her feature debut with a lovely visual ballad about Sea Island blacks in 1902. A bit long and diffuse but the work of a real talent. (Reviewed 2/10/92)* **Howards End.** *A satisfactory adaptation of the great novel, magnificently acted by Vanessa Redgrave, Emma Thompson, Anthony Hopkins, and (surprise!) Helena Bonham Carter. James Ivory's direction makes the most of the lush visual texture without overload. (3/23/92)* **JFK.** *Historically rickety but passionately made, Oliver Stone's inquiry into the assassination manages to be both an outcry against Vietnam and a glossary of American conspiracy nightmares. (1/27/92)* **Othello.** *A newly printed and recorded version of the 1952 Orson Welles film. Ultimately it all collapses because of Welles's vapid Moor. Still, for collectors of Welles . . . (3/9/92)* **—SK**

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Chushingura, one had to specify the director. Ghetto films have almost reached that state, equally ritualized in episode and character. But with ghetto films it's a bit dicier because the dividing line between serious intent and exploitation is often fuzzy.

By the time the ritual reaches *American Me*, that dividing line is further obscured by Olmos's sententious directing, which adds another dab of spuriousness to what was doubtlessly meant as truth.

This Is My Life (20th Century Fox). Very many films ask us to take their intents as their accomplishments. This film tells us early that it wants to be hip but heart-tugging, witty but warm. A New York divorcée with two young daughters yearns to be a stand-up comic. Not the least promising premise in the world, despite its echoes of Sally Field's *Punchline* (1988), but the execution is so feeble that the intent sticks out like the bones of an unfleshed skeleton.

The screenplay, from a novel by Meg Wolitzer, was written by Nora and Delia Ephron, the first of whom has a reputation as a wit. I don't know whether the samples that we see of the heroine's comic routines come from Wolitzer or the Ephrons, but wherever they come from, they don't go far. They certainly don't explain the heroine's rise to success.

Worsening matters, Julie Kavner's performance in the leading role is coarse and heavy. The film sounds as if it might have been written for Bette Midler, who would have helped it. If so, they failed to get Midler and settled for Kavner. It's hard to believe that anyone would have written it for Kavner in the first place.

Ephron directed and is unable to awaken Dan Aykroyd, Kavner's agent, from somnambulism. Ephron's best achievement in the directing department is with the two daughters, Samantha Mathis and Gaby Hoffmann, who *are* witty and warm.

Memoirs of an Invisible Man (Warner Bros.). After the screening of *Where Angels Fear To Tread* a few weeks ago, a friend said he couldn't remember a previous film whose score was written by a woman. (Rachel Portman in that case.) Now there's another: Shirley Walker for *Memoirs*.

But that's the only noteworthy point about this laborious comedy with Chevy Chase as a smoothie stockbroker who is in a nuclear lab when it blows and who is rendered invisible. Yes, there's one other curious matter. Not one person in the picture has ever seen or heard of *The Invisible Man*, the 1933 film derived from H. G. Wells starring Claude Rains. Not one person says, as Chase's condition becomes known, "Good Lord, it's just like the old movie." •

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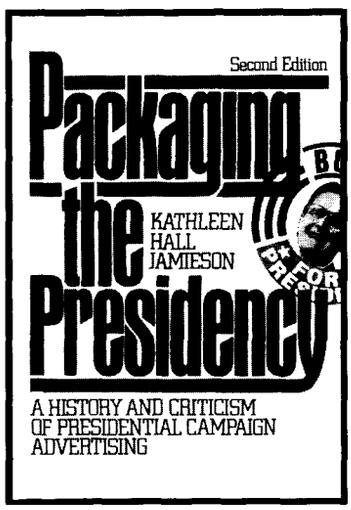
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An American Hunger

BY ANDREW DELBANCO

Early Works: Lawd Today!, Uncle Tom's Children, Native Son by Richard Wright edited by Arnold Rampersad

(Library of America, 936 pp., $35)

Later Works: Black Boy (American Hunger), The Outsider by Richard Wright edited by Arnold Rampersad

(Library of America, 887 pp., $35)

I first read *Native Son* in unreflective fascination when I was 16. I remember feeling queasy during the early scenes when the bubbly Chicago heiress Mary Dalton and her fast-talking radical boyfriend patronize a ghetto boy and conscript him as a tour guide for a cruise through the "black belt." Reading these scenes made me think of the time in grade school when I had invited a black child from the "projects" to my suburban home. After introducing him to my mother, I waited for him to join us for lunch, until his plate of ravioli had grown cold and I discovered that he had climbed out the window of our first-floor bathroom and run back down the hill to school. For nearly ten years I had not begun to imagine the mental storm that must have sent him out that window—until I read of Bigger's panic over whether to enter the Daltons' house through the front door or back, of his shrinking when the white housemaid approaches so close that he can "see a tiny mole at the corner of her mouth," and of his "misjudging how far back he was sitting" in an overplump chair, so that, "conscious of every square inch of skin on his black body," he has to struggle to his feet when the "amused" Mr. Dalton arrives to interview him for the job of chauffeur. These passages made me retrospectively embarrassed and confused.

When next I read *Native Son*, I was living near Boston, and it delivered a different shock of recognition. It compelled me to move in memory between the scenes in which Dalton's private detective, trying to scare the truth out of Bigger about Mary's disappearance, calls him a "*goddamn* black sonofabitch!" and a sunny afternoon at Fenway Park when, sitting for once in a really good box seat, I had found myself behind a pair of plaid-slacked fans who spent the whole game heckling the Red Sox first baseman for being a "black bastard," in a voice loud enough for him to hear.

And now that I have read *Native Son* again, this time with a mind clogged by other books, I find myself in the grip of an entirely new experience. This is partly because Arnold Rampersad and the editors of the Library of America have given us not the original published version of 1940, but the text of the bound galleys that lay, for weeks during the fall of 1939, on the submission desk at the Book-of-the-Month Club, while the directors fretted over whether they could tolerate Bigger masturbating in a movie theater, or Mary Dalton moving her "hips ... in a hard and veritable grind" against his black body. Richard Wright was a young writer tasting his first chance for fame, and so when the verdict came in that these scenes had to be cut if the Club was to select his novel, he agreed. At last, with the deletions now restored, we have, as Rampersad says, the words of the book as Wright "wanted them to be read."

It is always a tricky business to disqualify a text that a living author has at least tacitly approved. A few years ago a group of scholars, working on the premise that Theodore Dreiser had been bullied into making changes in the text of *Sister Carrie* just before it went to press, put forward a new text based on his typescript, and the Library of America wisely refrained from following suit. This time the Library has rejected the text in which an American classic has been known for half a century. The publication of this new edition is not just an editorial innovation, it is a major event in American literary history.

There can be no doubt that the book is better for the restorations. For one thing, the restored text solves some consistency problems as when the State's Attorney tells Bigger that "I knew about that dirty trick you and your friend Jack pulled off in the Regal Theatre"—a statement that floats without antecedent in the 1940 text, but, in the intact version, refers to Bigger's "polishing his night stick" in the movie house. More important than such textual repairs is their total effect: we now have the first book in our literary history that represented the full, urgent sexuality of a young black man—here as he moves upon Bessie's body, with whom he lies among the garbage and rats in an abandoned tenement where they are hiding from the vigilantes and police:

> The loud demand of the tensity of his own body was a voice that drowned out hers. In the cold darkness of the room it seemed that he was on some vast turning wheel that made him want to turn faster and faster; that in turning faster he would get warmth and sleep and be rid of his tense fatigue. He was conscious of nothing now but her and what he wanted. He flung the cover back, ignoring the cold, and not knowing that he did it.... His desire was naked and hot in his hand and his fingers were touching her.... He heard her breathing heavily and heard his own breath going and coming heavily. *Bigger.* Now. All. All. Now. All. *Bigger.*...
>
> He lay still, feeling rid of that hunger and tenseness and hearing the wail of the night wind over and above his and her breathing. He turned away from her and lay on his back again, stretching his legs wide apart.

Native Son is a book about the imperatives of the body—about Bigger's panic-sweat beading on his skin; about his convulsive stomach pain when he gulps water after parched days on the run; about his struggle to will his erection to subside while a white woman and man have sex on the car seat behind him. There are brilliant descriptions of Bigger forcing a street crony to lick the blade of his knife in an act of public submission, and of his chewing frantically his first loaf of bread in days, until it bulges his cheeks like a trumpeter's and coaxes the scarce saliva from his tongue.

The book has an almost brutal immediacy, which the newly restored text not

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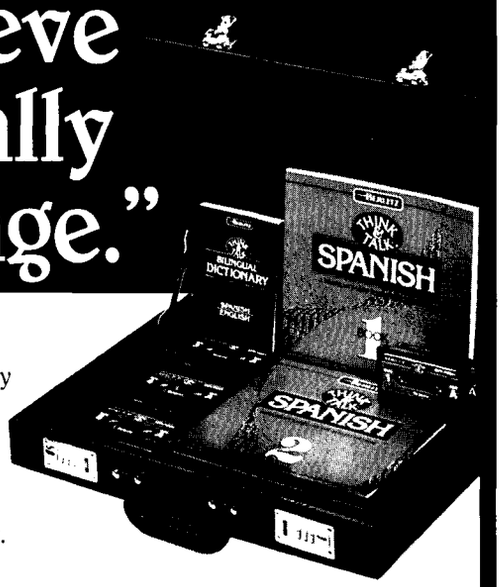
only confirms, but heightens. I have never been able to drive past the severe houses of Hyde Park, or through the tangent black neighborhoods, without seeing Bigger huddled against a steamed window in a passing streetcar, or seeing the snow fall softly, as if flake by flake, onto the Daltons' blue Buick that he has left parked in their gated driveway. One feels pushed by the wind off the lake toward the edge of the plains; one peers with Bigger through the "gauzelike curtain of snow" at the streetlights that taunt him with the promise of warmth—"street lamps covered with thick coatings of snow, gleaming like huge frosted moons above his head."

For Theodore Dreiser forty years earlier (from whose *An American Tragedy*, published in 1925, Wright may have gotten the idea of a half-conscious murder), these lamps had been "blinking lines of gas-lamps, fluttering in the wind," but they were already Chicago's visual signature—tiny fires disappearing in long perspectival lines that lead out of the city into the prairie distance. Like Dreiser, Wright was not a native-born Chicagoan; his Mississippi origins are the subject of *Black Boy* (1945), the book in which he recounted his awakening from a brutal childhood. The son of an illiterate sharecropper who deserted the family, Wright struggled against poverty and the intransigent reality of Southern racism. He was bounced from grandmother to aunt to orphanage while his mother sank into invalidism and despair. His brilliance and his discontent began to find literary expression during his schooling in Memphis, and, at 19, he moved to the great Midwestern city where he quickly became, in his guts, a Chicago writer. Wright was aware, as New England and Southern and even New York writers were less likely to be early in this century, that all class distinctions in America were of absurdly recent vintage, and vulnerable to a surge or drop in the commodity market or to the perpetual real-estate scramble. Wright was a student of both the dreamless poor and the cocksure rich, whom he found locked in vicious interdependence in Chicago.

Though he had broken with the Chicago Communist Party in 1937, he did not leave the national party until 1942, and was still trying to construct *Native Son* within the framework of a class analysis. He had been active in the '30s in the John Reed Club, a largely white literary organization sponsored by the Communists, and later became Harlem editor of *The Daily Worker*. His early novel *Lawd Today!* (published posthumously) is largely an evocation of soul-deadening labor; its central character, like Wright himself (who held jobs during these years as a ditch-digger, delivery boy, dishwasher, hospital worker), is a postal clerk whose body becomes a mechanical extension of the canceling machine, and whose mind can only accommodate "images [that] would flit [in] ... and then aimlessly out again, like stray cats." The early stories, collected in *Uncle Tom's Children* (1938), look back to the South, and are concerned with the gathering desperation of rural blacks, whose inarticulate rage against a world owned by white men was beginning to take the form of apocalyptic expectation.

This implicit Communist criticism of capitalist society is still at work in *Native Son*, in which Wright gives Bigger an incipient proletarian consciousness, a desire to "merge himself with others and be a part of this world, to lose himself in it so he could find himself, to be allowed a chance to live like others, even though he was black." As part of the same allegory of class conflict, Wright draws the kindly Mr. Dalton as a stock figure from agitprop fiction—a giver to causes who sends his servants to

"They couldn't believe an American actually spoke their language."



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night school even as he rakes in the rent from black tenants who live five to a rat-infested room (a contradiction of which "in a sullen way Bigger was conscious"). And if Dalton keeps a human screen of "house niggers" between him and the brutal reality of the plantation, he has an overseer to do his dirty work—Britten, the thick-necked security man, who studies Bigger to see if he waves his hands about and if his voice rises at the ends of sentences (clues that would clinch his theory that he has been fraternizing with Jews).

Here, under rough interrogation, Bigger begins to see the futility of his plan to blame Mary's murder on Jan, her Communist boyfriend: "Britten loosened his fingers from Bigger's collar and shrugged his shoulders. Bigger relaxed, still standing, his head resting against the wall, aching. He had not thought that anyone would dare think that he, a black Negro, would be Jan's partner." This remarkable phrase, "black Negro," is not a tautology, but a clue that the concept of "Negro" is, for Wright, not fundamentally a racial idea. "Negro" is a generic word for hopelessness and degradation. The early pages on Bigger—his portrait as a gang leader who compensates with cruelty for his sense of exile from the world of satisfactions—are almost indistinguishable in social content from James T. Farrell's portrait of the Irish thug in *Studs Lonigan* (1932-35).

RICHARD WRIGHT BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

But a "black Negro" is something quite different—something for which Bigger hates himself more than he hates his oppressor. A "black Negro" is worse, he knows, than the refuse of the white world, since he is a creature held by whites of every class (from tycoons to vigilantes, they all close ranks in his pursuit) to be not only low and incorrigible, but foul and poisonous. A wall stands between Bigger and the sensations he craves. He finds himself smacked back like a dog that lifts its head to the table rather than wait for the white man's scraps to fall to the floor. Not merely exploited, he is despised; and *Native Son*, almost in spite of itself, is a book about this distinction.

It is, in other words, a book about self-hatred—about a young man who loathes his own color and physiognomy and dialect and all the features of his irreparable social ugliness. Bigger is not so much an autonomous consciousness as he is the projection of the white imagination, a figure whose closest precursors in American fiction come not from previous black writers, but from racist white writers (such as Thomas Dixon, author of *The Clansman*, 1905) for whom black men were nothing more than clothed apes. Earlier black writers had certainly remarked the "peculiar sensation," as W. E. B. DuBois famously put it, of a "double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." But before Wright, black novelists had tended to approach this psychological dilemma from a connoisseur's distance and with Jamesian finesse—as in the tradition of the mulatto novel, which dramatized the mixed relief and guilt of light-skinned blacks who tried to solve the problem of double-consciousness by obliterating their black identity altogether.

In the 1920s and '30s black literary intellectuals (especially those who participated in what became known as the Harlem Renaissance) turned more openly to a celebration of their African identity—a gesture with which Wright sympathized, but which he suspected of self-delusion and accommodation to the prurient white taste for the exotic. Wright was working toward an unblinking confrontation with the problem of black identity in *Lawd Today!* and in the stories of *Uncle Tom's Children*. But it is in *Native Son*, despite Bigger's lumpish inarticulateness, that he gives full voice to the anguish of the "black Negro":

> What did he want? What did he love and what did he hate? He did not know. There was something he *knew* and something he *felt*; something the *world* gave him and something he *himself* had; something spread out in *front* of him and something spread out in *back*; and never in all his life, with this black skin of his, had the two worlds, thought and feeling, will and mind, aspiration and satisfaction, been together; never had he felt a sense of wholeness ... only under the stress of hate was the conflict resolved.

What Bigger discovers in the moments when he kills is that his reactive life of shame and fear can become hideously creative, that he can animate the ghostly world through which he has been wandering in numb fright. A cup of hot milk, a shot of whiskey, the touch of Bessie's flesh, even the very conditions of hunger and desire, become reassurances of life itself:

> The memory of the bottle of milk Bessie had heated for him last night came back so strongly that he could almost taste it.... He saw himself take the top off the white bottle, with some of the warm milk spilling over his black fingers, and then lift the bottle to his mouth and tilt his head and drink.... He felt in his hunger a deep sense of duty, as powerful as the urge to breathe, as intimate as the beat of his heart.... He wanted to pull off his clothes and roll in the snow until something nour-

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ishing seeped into his body through the pores of his skin. He wanted to grip something in his hands so hard that it would turn to food.

But the terrible honesty of *Native Son* was its acknowledgment that people to whom life has been denied can only learn contempt from those who deny them. (Wright understood how effective was the fascists' appeal to unappeased resentment.) And so Bigger begins to live through a kind of aesthetics of hate:

> He was living, truly and deeply, no matter what others might think, looking at him with their blind eyes. Never had he had the chance to live out the consequences of his actions; never had his will been so free as in this night and day of fear and murder and flight.

For Bigger there is an almost erotic pleasure in seeing his picture in the papers, and his terror mixes with thrill while he watches from the rooftop as the white mobs converge upon him. He has provoked them, enraged them, even eluded and confounded them. After a lifetime of being owned, he now possesses them.

Bigger's sensory awakening is a version of Wright's own (right down to the consoling taste of warm milk), which he describes in *Black Boy*:

> The days and hours began to speak now with a clearer tongue. Each experience had a meaning of its own.... There was the drenching hospitality in the pervading smell of sweet magnolias.... There was the dry hot summer morning when I scratched my bare arms on briers while picking blackberries and came home with my fingers and lips stained black with sweet berry juice.... There was the drugged, sleepy feeing that came from sipping glasses of milk, drinking them slowly so that they would last a long time, and drinking enough for the first time in my life.

For Wright, the resurrection of his senses was a liberating event, benign and even gentle, evoked in almost pantheistic terms borrowed from Walt Whitman. For Bigger, it was the discovery that he had the power to damage and destroy white lives.

In 1940 Bigger's was an almost unwritable violence. Explosive, indiscriminate, he finds that he has a taste for killing: hours after burning Mary Dalton's body in the furnace he crushes Bessie's head with a brick, this black woman whom he both loves for her tenderness and hates for her despair. Wright's editors and sponsors worried that this squalid story might prove unreadable. They were wrong. *Native Son* sold 215,000 copies in three weeks—in a world poised on the verge of a conflagration in which the human capacity for systematic and spontaneous violence would be proved larger than anyone dreamed.

Wright had invented a young black man who awakens to himself by discovering his capacity for rage, by punching through the racial wall into moments of bodily contact (carnal and lethal) that confirm the aliveness of his body. In the autobiography that he wrote five years later, Wright makes it clear that he, too, had found salvation in the life of the body. He recalls the electric moments when, in his early days as a dishwasher in Chicago, a white waitress brushed casually against him without complaint—and another turned to him for intimate help:

> One summer morning a white girl came late to work and rushed into the pantry where I was busy. She went into the women's room and changed her clothes; I heard the door open and a second later I was surprised to hear her voice:
>
> "Richard, quick! Tie my apron!"
>
> She was standing with her back to me and the strings of her apron dangled loose. There was a moment of indecision on my part, then I took the two loose strings and carried them around her body and brought them again to her back and tied them in a clumsy knot.
>
> "Thanks a million," she said grasping my hand for a split second, and was gone.

In the South this incandescent moment would have been read by virtually any observer as a hint of miscegenation. But Wright discovered a new world in Chicago—not a place where taboos could be broken, but a place where the dividing line of race could simply be forgotten in the press of daily life. He delighted in Chicago because it occasionally offered anonymity: "It was strange to pause before a crowded newsstand and buy a newspaper without having to wait until a white man was served." And it was wonderfully strange to ride the trolley beside a white man who, instead of pulling away, "was still staring out the window, his mind fastened on some inward thought. I did not exist for him; I was as far from his mind as the stone buildings that swept past in the street."

In the mid-1940s Wright moved to Paris (a "city of refuge," he called it) and became part of the literary circle including Gertrude Stein (whose "Melanctha" had been an early influence) and André Gide, as well as leading intellectuals of the "Négritude" movement—Léopold Senghor, Aimé Césaire, and others. Wright, in turn, gave encouragement and patronage to younger black American writers like James Baldwin and Chester Himes. In the later '40s and early '50s he devoted himself to a new novel, *The Outsider* (1953)—the story of a black intellectual who begins life with a new identity after being presumed dead in a train wreck. Wright composed this novel, whose theme is the exhilarating loss of a burdensome self, under the personal influence of Sartre and de Beauvoir, and after considerable reading in Heidegger and Husserl. Like the second section of his autobiography (which he had agreed to drop, again at the behest of the Book-of-the-Month Club, and which was published after his death under the original title of the whole work, *American Hunger*), *The Outsider* contained a bitter attack on the Communist Party as a purveyor of false messianic hope.

Along with the second part of the mutilated autobiography (now reattached to *Black Boy* in the Library of America edition), *The Outsider* is a candid record of Wright's disillusionment with the Communist promise. Blaming the Party for intervening with friends at the Book Club to drop the offending section of his memoir, he again acceded to the pressure, but went on to publish some of the deleted chapters separately—including one long section, "I Tried to be a Communist," that appeared in *The Atlantic* and was widely read in Richard Crossman's notable book, *The God That Failed* (1950).

In 1954 Wright brought out *Savage Holiday*, a novel about a white psychopathic murderer that was well received in France but pretty much ignored at home. By now he was becoming a little formulaic in his demonstration of savagery—this time not beneath the servility of a black youth, but just below the civility of a middle-class white man. Spanning the decade from the end of the Second World War to the height of McCarthyism (Wright reverted to his native Mississippi for the setting of his last novel, *The Long Dream*, 1958), all of this writing has sporadic power and historical interest. But his artistic imagination had been nearly exhausted in *Native Son*—the book in which he had faced up to the blood-dread between whites and blacks, and had shown, in horror and sorrow, how impervious it was to rationalist solutions offered by both reformers and radicals.

Wright did not want to believe in the intractability of the problem. He felt himself fleetingly released from it among the waitresses in the Chicago kitchen, and even in *Native Son* he

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reached for themes that transcend it. His early stories, as Baldwin remarked after his death, "did not make me think ... particularly of Negroes. They made me think of human loss and helplessness." One of the rewards of coming back after years to *Native Son* is to see how reductive it is to read it as merely a tract about race. It can be read as a transcription of an adolescent dream, as a portrait of a man for whom guilt is a half-formed emotion, as a criticism of philanthropic sentimentality.

It is also a prescient anticipation of contemporary insights into the pathologies of the ghetto family, and of the indictment of black men, lately handed down in black feminist writing, for punishing black women in recompense for their stolen dignity. It is certainly, too, a tour de force of psychological manipulation: when the bloodhound reporters, milling about in the Daltons' overheated basement, tell Bigger to clear out the ashes to quiet the furnace, we shudder with him as Mary's unconsumed bones drop down through the grate. Our allegiance is with Bigger, even as we apprehend more and more of his animal ferocity.

"Shattering" is a critical word that has been properly consigned to service as an adjective in blurbs. But there *is* a class of books for which this word, or some synonym that conveys the idea that a book can do real violence to the mind, is indispensable. Not all great books work by this kind of assault, but some do, and thereby they are fatal to whatever mental structure the reader inhabits when he sits down to read them. *Native Son* is such a book. It is all the more remarkable because it achieves its destructive power not by exposing the inadequacies of conventional thinking, but by dramatizing conventional ideas in such a way that they can never be held casually again. *Native Son* was indeed the book Wright swore to write so that "no one would weep over it," the book that "would be so hard and deep" that it would deny its readers "the consolation of tears." It was the first book that forced Americans to take their racial fears seriously, and it did so by turning their most vicious thoughts against themselves.

It is a profound irony that the arc of Wright's career moved downward after *Native Son* because of his refusal to be imprisoned by the thematics of race. His move to France, where he partook of the prestige attached to the man of color in exile from crass America, did not enlarge him as a writer. He became, perhaps, a more cosmopolitan artist. Still, as Baldwin said, speaking from within the same paradox, Paris "would not have been a city of refuge for us if we had not been armed with American passports," and "it did not seem worthwhile to me to have fled the native fantasy only to embrace a foreign one."

In his moving eulogy, Baldwin reflected that Wright was "one of the most illustrious victims" of "the war in the breast between blackness and whiteness." Writing in the heady atmosphere of postcolonial possibility, Baldwin added that "it is no longer important to be white—thank heaven—the white face is no longer invested with the power of this world; and it is devoutly to be hoped that it will soon no longer be important to be black." Such a dissolution of difference was Wright's hope, too. All his work was a plea that racial identity be submerged in the colorless fact of being human. But his enduring greatness as an artist will be owed, I think, to his unprecedented ability to convey the horror of being black in America. What he wished for was to lose his subject. After reading *Native Son*, no one can doubt his willingness to make the sacrifice.

ANDREW DELBANCO has recently edited and written the introduction to *The Portable Abraham Lincoln* (Viking).

THE
MODERN REVIEW
LOW CULTURE FOR HIGHBROWS

'Julie Burchill is Britain's Ma Barker ... Her posse is the staff of the new quarterly *The Modern Review*, a pop cult magazine meant to seize the moment.'
James Wolcott, *Vanity Fair*.

'Sagging now in Earthquake's stupendous embrace, head lolling, eyes closed, Hulk is plainly at the point of extinction. Another squeeze and his orifices are clearly going to start spurting gravy. The ref., a six foot midget, conducts the vital functions test, holding Hulk's right arm to the limit and then letting it drop. He does it again, it drops again. One more time and you can whistle up the paramedics. He does it a third time and—the arm starts to droop—but no, momentarily it twitches; it straightens and... the index extends! Hulk's got it back again! Groggily his eyes open. Where is he? He poodles the sweat from his very high brow. He grins a demon kind of grin. It says: a) Stuff this for a game of soldiers; and b) No more Mr Nice Guy.'

Martin Cropper on Hulk Hogan

'There are probably those who would see in *Super Mario Bros* a wealth of references to Japan's recent past. The constantly evolving, unnatural creatures seem to speak of some horrific nuclear catastrophe. The enemies tend to be turtles, beetles and poisonous fish—precisely the kind of creatures you'd expect to survive a nuclear war. And as for the 'Mushroom People'... well, it's obvious innit. The final stage in *Super Mario Bros 3* is called 'Night World'—a reference, no doubt, to the dreaded nuclear winter.'

Toby Young on Nintendo

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The Poverty of Theory

BY ALAN RYAN

After the Fall: The Failure of Communism and the Future of Socialism edited by Robin Blackburn

(Verso, 348 pp., $59.95, $17.95 paper)

This book is something of a curiosity. As its title suggests, it is a series of reflections on the collapse of communism from the pens of anxious socialists rather than rejoicing dissidents or anti-Communists. Today it exudes embarrassment and unease, but in a decade's time archaeologists investigating the twentieth-century Marxist left may treat it as a valuable cultural artifact. Of its twenty essays, more than half have been reprinted from the British quarterly *The New Left Review*. All the essays appeared between 1989 and 1991, mostly early on in the long collapse of Eastern European communism.

The authors range from Norberto Bobbio to Edward Thompson by way of Andre Gorz, Jürgen Habermas, Eric Hobsbawm, Fred Halliday, and more—a group that any impartial spectator would nominate as the socialist intelligentsia's A-team. They have gallantly resisted what must have been an acute temptation to insert at least a few footnotes to square what they thought would happen with what did. And if they comprehensively fail to answer the question of what will happen "after the fall," they provide a good many insights into what it felt like to liberal Western Marxists.

To many American readers, *The New Left Review* will be alien territory. The journal was born in January 1960, as part of the fallout from what the British left saw as the two catastrophes of 1956, the Russian suppression of the revolution in Hungary and the British government's adventure in Suez. The Hungarian Revolution halved the membership of the British Communist Party, and many of those who stayed—E. P. Thompson among them—were driven to a serious reconsideration of their views. The Suez fiasco made the non-Communist left exceedingly angry with the Conservative Britain of Eden and Macmillan. There was a convergence of forces, and one of its results was the *Review*. Nor were the results confined to the life of the mind. The British New Left—unlike the American New Left of a few years later—aimed to put pressure on the British Labour Party and on the trade union movement, as well as raising the intellectual level of political debate.

For the first few years of its life, the *Review* was intellectually supported by New Left groups that provided an intelligent alternative to local Labour parties, Fabian Society branches, and the like. It is hard to know how much effect any of this had, other than accelerating the process by which the ideological left in constituency parties and unions became increasingly alienated from the pragmatic leadership of Harold Wilson and his friends. It certainly raised the level of consciousness of the average undergraduate, if not of the average worker.

The New Left Review's first two years were very much bound up with the politics of the Labour Party, its defeat by Macmillan in 1959, and its temporary capture by the nuclear disarmament movement. It was edited by Stuart Hall, whose first editorial invoked William Morris as an exemplary British leftist. Its most characteristic role in the intellectual life of the left was established after Perry Anderson became its editor in 1962. For the next two decades it became the main route for the transmission of assorted forms of European Marxism to the phlegmatic and insular, and deplorably empiricist, British. Thompson remembered the change as being a bit like railroad modernization: "Old Left steam-engines were swept off the tracks; wayside halts ('Commitment,' 'What Next for CND?,' 'Women in Love') were boarded up; and the lines were electrified for the speedy traffic from the marxistentialist Left Bank."

British Marxism had been expressed in the simple class-war politics that gave the Communist Party its astonishing hold over the trade unions, or in the writing of a social history whose hero was the otherwise inarticulate working class. This was clumsily done by Party sentimentalists such as A. L. Morton, and with the utmost skill by robust independents such as Thompson. But no British philosopher had a good word to say for the dialectic. No British intellectual looked for ways to reconcile psychoanalysis and Marxism (it is impossible to imagine Erich Fromm or Herbert Marcuse springing from, or thriving on, British soil).

That there was a British audience for the Frankfurt School and the rebarbative structuralism of Louis Althusser was a great discovery of the time. Still, some of us thought the passion for continental Marxism was a sad joke. The thought that British trade unions needed an injection of Parisian structuralism to heighten their revolutionary consciousness was hard to take. And the *Review*'s editorial tone could be spectacularly snobbish. The wretched British were constantly rebuked for allowing their discursive practices to fall below the level attained by the revolutionary French; and the prevailing tone was too often lugubrious rather than mordant.

The theoretical line, though, was pretty catholic. Frankfurters, Trotskyites, Third World Firsters were as welcome as disciples of Lukács. Gramsci was admired for the skill with which he coped with the problem of "uneven development"—that is, with the fact that Communist governments came into existence in countries that were incapable of making them work properly. Althusser was admired for his high philosophical tone, and for his claim that Marxism "is not a humanism," that human agents play no part in history but are merely "bearers" of the structural forces that determine their fate. It now looks astonishingly implausible, but it was done with great intelligence, great scholarly scrupulousness, and, in general, with great care for the decencies of controversy. The attempt to persuade the British to join the intellectual common market also provoked one really splendid retort, in the form of Thompson's outraged blast against Althusser and his English epigoni in *The Poverty of Theory*. Thompson's essay has had a great deal less impact on British politics than William Cobbett's polemics, but it did not disgrace the tradition of Cobbett's blistering attack on the "feelosophical villains."

Nor was the high theoretical line all that readers of the *Review* received. Every issue contained long essays on the economic and political travails of the Third World, or the cultural and intellectual plight of actually existing socialists in Eastern Europe. Halliday was able better than most to preserve a respect for the facts along with the ambitions of Marxist geopolitics. More than once he insisted that his own view of geopolitical compe-

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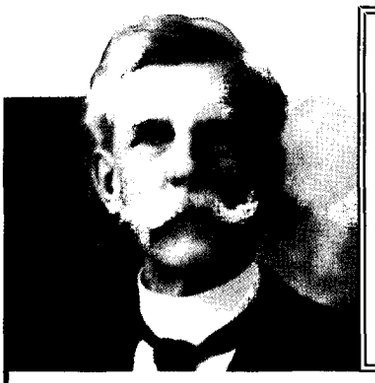
tition in the '70s was very like Henry Kissinger's: that the United States became increasingly aggressive as the American leadership became increasingly anxious that more and more countries were falling to left-wing revolutions, while American freedom of action was cramped by the Soviet achievement of something close to nuclear parity. It is no surprise that Halliday has been respected for his insights even by writers and politicians whose allegiances are at odds with his.

The *Review* was also virtuous about defending dissidents in socialist countries against persecution by their governments. Fellow traveling, ignorance, self-deception, and moral cowardice were strikingly absent from its editorial board and from its pages. It could be carried away by momentary enthusiasm, notably in 1968 when the longed-for union of workers, students, and revolutionary intellectuals briefly seemed about to spring up, and all sorts of people said and did things that they would now rather not remember. (Paul Johnson, now a pillar of the right, once admired Danny the Red; and it is said that the editor of this volume once proposed that a student meeting at the London School of Economics seize the local telecommunications tower and thereby paralyze the British government.) In general, however, sobriety has been the dominant note.

The *Review*'s attitude toward the Soviet Union has been wary rather than enthusiastically hostile or friendly, and that is the prevailing tone here. The Soviet Union has never been held up as a model for any society to emulate, and the stagnant, dreary, oppressive quality of everyday Soviet existence was never blinked at. The Soviet Union's chief virtue was its existence as a counterweight to American bullying of Third World countries and American efforts to stop left-wing insurrectionary movements from coming to power anywhere in the world. This was never altogether persuasive. It is arguable, indeed, that the chief effect of the competition was to flood Third World countries with military hardware that allowed local military tyrants to rule in their own corrupt interest, and to paralyze the patron state—Soviet or American—which always feared the defection of clients to the other side.

The other solitary merit of the Soviet Union for the writers at *The New Left Review* was to serve as a focus for the aspirations of workers in developed countries, frightening employers and governments into accepting a more humane capitalism sustained by Keyne-



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sian policies of full employment and reasonable welfare provisions. Critics who dismiss Cuba, Angola, or Nicaragua as corrupt Stalinist slums will also dismiss all or most of this as mere sentimentality. Those of us who think that the right is usually quicker to resort to violence than the left, more brutal and more reluctant to stop, will think there is something in it.

Against this background, *After the Fall* is not entirely unpredictable. Its authors are not unbowed, but they are not ready to quit. Although Robin Blackburn says that the book explores "the historical meaning of communism's meteoric trajectory across the twentieth century," most of these pieces are less devoted to a dispassionate retrospective of the past seventy-five years than haunted by the obvious question of what's left for the left if socialism has been so enthusiastically rejected in Russia and Eastern and Central Europe. The prevailing view is the unsurprising thought that we ought to shed no tears for the former Soviet bloc, but ought not to celebrate the glories of capitalist democracy either.

Socialism as practiced in the Soviet bloc solved few of capitalism's obvious problems; it doesn't follow that capitalism has shed those problems. Bobbio—an Italian senator and a political scientist, and the epitome of liberal socialism—sums up in the first essay: "Democracy, let us admit it, has overcome the challenge of historical communism. But what means and what ideals does it have to confront those very problems out of which the Communist challenge was born?" The question is largely rhetorical. Most of the essayists agree that capitalist-liberal democracy will have a hard time policing its treatment of the environment, its racial and ethnic tensions, its urban blight, its difficulties with relations between the sexes and within families, and indeed that it will be all the harder to solve any of these problems in the absence of an enemy that at least distracted the public's attention.

The shock to which the Marxist left has had to accustom itself is the discovery that there was simply no room in the Communist world for what Alexander Dubček proposed in 1968, for "socialism with a human face." Given how many loyal Communists argued in favor of Brezhnev's invasion in 1968, given what a symbol Dubček was of the hopes of reformists all over the Soviet bloc, given how many Marxists finally gave up on the Soviet Union as a result of the invasion, the recognition that reform within the socialist system never got off the ground is a painful one.

Dubček, like Gorbachev after him, wanted the one thing that was not on the menu. He wanted Communist rule backed by free and fair elections, Communist rule in which the principle was accepted that the Party could be voted out of power, but where somehow it would not happen. Once the reality emerged that throughout Eastern-Central Europe local Communist Parties would obtain 10 percent of the vote if they were lucky, the choice lay between democracy and socialism. Once the regime lost its nerve about defending its autocratic rule with tanks and guns, "actually existing socialism" was done for.

Though almost everyone who speculates about the future is careful to disown pretensions to prophecy, the only thing that these essays uniformly underestimated is the speed with which the Soviet system would fall to pieces—and in this they are at one with more than 99 percent of commentators, diplomats, and politicians here and in the Soviet Union. And *After the Fall* is as apprehensive as any of its readers about what will happen in Eastern-Central Europe now that democracy is more or less in place. The stampede to ill-understood free market economics is aptly described by Eric Hobsbawm as the result of thinking that since the North Pole is freezing cold, the opposite pole will be beautifully warm. Hobsbawm was not the only contributor to see as soon as the Berlin Wall came down that there was every chance that the Soviet Union would dissolve into its component republics, that those republics might well be anything but friendly toward each other, and that this unraveling process might involve civil war in the Balkans and elsewhere, too.

The two most distinctive notes struck by the book are ones that may seem quite strange to American readers. The first is a matter of how the British and European left read the history of the Soviet Union. More than one of these essays is a reminder of how different the Second World War—as well as Russia—looks from opposite sides of the Atlantic. Hobsbawm, for instance, insists that liberal democracy in Western Europe exists even now courtesy of the Red army. This is not something for which we should light candles to the blessed memory of Uncle Joe. Stalin no doubt hoped that the Molotov-Ribbentrop treaty would turn Hitler's troops west, and did not care what the consequences were for western Europe. But once Hitler decided to invade Russia, four-fifths of Germany's armed forces were needed on the eastern front and only one-fifth was left on the western front. Both in terms of the casualties inflicted and the amount of matériel consumed, it was the eastern front that saved western Europe.

What this implies about how the war would have gone otherwise is anyone's guess. Whether the American Army would have had the numbers, training, and equipment to drive a 100-division

On Not Translating Paul Valéry

The translation falters. What do you do?
Flip open a dictionary in a strange tongue
and find a word for "convenience." None.
Watch helium balloons lift tourists

to a rim of air where it is impossible
to breathe. The translation crumples.
What are you worth? Burgundy, zinfandel,
chardonnay in wide-mouth carafes.

Yellow jackets drag to glass lips,
brush antennae on a glistening residue
of saliva and nectar. They fall, fail
to swim in bright colors, drown, solidify

when spooned out like an unknown woman
from Pompeii who rests elbows and knees
in a glass case; ash crystallized into skin.
The translation convulses. What can you do?

Ride an inflatable dolphin from F.A.O. Schwarz
Toy Store out into a lake; snorkel between teeth,
goggles framing a floor of tires and rusted knives.
Ripples fold light around your face.

The translation improves. What do you know?
Father. He cried on my shoulder,
though I was at a great distance.
Mother in the hospital. The house empty.

I'm trying to tell you what it meant,
but there is no word in my dictionary.
I'm writing my father cried.
If you read this, do not walk away.

JOHN HARVEY

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German army out of France and across the Rhine—either before, after, or in conjunction with its campaign in the Pacific—is no doubt debatable. It is true, of course, that the Red army played the major role in destroying the German army on the ground, and in that sense it was the Red army that got the Nazis out of Paris as well as out of Berlin. All the same, it is hard to imagine Roosevelt and Churchill contenting themselves with anything less than the complete destruction of Nazism, no matter how long it might have taken.

This global public service, however inadvertent, was not matched by the Soviet Union's benefits for its own population. Alexander Cockburn insists that the Brezhnev years were the Golden Age of the Soviet working class and seems to regret the passing of a creed that inspired the International Brigade, and Frederic Jameson argues that the collapse of communism was owed to its success; but otherwise sense prevails. The Red army may have made the non-Soviet world safe for democracy, but the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its leaders did nothing to make the part of the world under their influence safe for any sort of self-government. Several of the contributors, however, observe in passing that the economic record is more mixed than the current collapse sometimes suggests. Throughout the 1930s it was not absurd to think that capitalism was in terminal crisis, while the Soviet Union at least offered everyone employment, food, education, and some level of health care.

It is all too easy to forget that as late as 1957 the Soviet success in getting Sputnik into orbit persuaded many Americans that it was only a matter of time before the Soviet Union overtook the capitalist countries of the West. Richard Crossman argued at the same time that the British Labour Party had to adhere to its 1918 collectivist constitution, not out of loyalty to the past, but because a planned economy was the only hope of competing with the Soviets. What nobody realized at the time was that the German and Japanese economic miracles were just getting into their stride, while the Soviet Union was about to suffer from terminal political and economic sclerosis. It was always apparent that the strength of the Soviet Union lay in old-fashioned industry, in coal, steel, and armaments; and that, whatever the true rate of growth in those sectors, consumers enjoyed little benefit; and that agriculture was a perennial problem. What was not foreseen was that an economy that had grown as fast as any economy in the world would fail to make the transition from the industrial revolution of the last century to the high-technology revolution of this century.

The other aspect of these essays that may come as a nasty surprise to American readers is the uniform hostility to American policy toward the Third World, and the uniform belief that globally considered, capitalism remains brutal, exploitative, destructive of the environment, intrinsically inegalitarian, and ineffective in providing public goods and basic necessities such as housing and health care. If the socialist heartland staggered to a halt, there is not much to rejoice at in the economic record of non-socialist countries in Latin America and Africa. Nor is the role of the United States in any of this a glorious one. Most of the things that can be said against Soviet attempts to establish friendly governments around the world, whether or not they did much good for their subjects, can be said against American efforts in the same direction.

This is particularly true when one sets the Soviet Union's treatment of the Soviet bloc alongside the American treatment of Central and South America. Whatever the demerits of the Sandinista regime, the United States clearly violated international law in setting about to destabilize it, aside from the assorted violations of domestic law perpetrated by the usual cast. Eduardo Galeano puts the point nicely when he observes that "the U.S. government invokes democracy with respect to Panama, Nicaragua, or Cuba in the way the East European governments invoked socialism—as an alibi." Americans are sometimes surprised to realize that the Monroe Doctrine strikes most of the world (not only the Marxist left) as morally on a par with the Brezhnev Doctrine.

Still, the final impression that *After the Fall* leaves is that the events of 1989 onward have put the final nail in the Marxian coffin. The analytical strengths of Marxism are still impressive—Blackburn's long and thoughtful wrestlings with the question of whether there is anything left for socialists to say to non-socialist friends has the global reach and the aspiration after systematic understanding that have always been the hallmarks of thoughtful Marxism. By now, however, the most orthodox political science tries to achieve as much. In the current cant, it doesn't take a rocket scientist, let alone a sophisticated Marxist, to see that there is something seriously wrong in the suggesting that laissez-faire capitalism has triumphed over the socialist alternative.

As several of these writers point out, the least successful capitalist regimes are the ones that make the most noise about their laissez-faire enthusiasms—the Republican United States and the Thatcherite United Kingdom—while the most successful have been highly regulated, much more egalitarian, and not terribly liberal in either their politics or their social attitudes. Which is hardly to say that all is well with the socialist project. Habermas is only one of several writers here who put their finger on the problem. The great power of the Marxian ideal was that it was not supposed to be an ideal, but "the real movement of things."

It was not just that socialism preached the desirability of justice, prosperity for working people, an end to booms and slumps, and so on; nobody denied that justice, economic rationality, and a diffused prosperity would be wonderful if they could be had. The power of Marxism lay in the claim that they *would* be had, that history would deliver them, that they were what history *meant*. The demonstration of these truths was what Marx's claim to be a scientific socialist was supposed to rest on. In this demonstration lay scientific socialism's superiority over "utopian" socialism and a mere "moralizing critique." One aspect of that scientific ruthlessness was that any good Marxist could have told you a dozen reasons why a primitive, autocratic society like Russia was absolutely incapable of achieving what Marx himself thought of as socialism; and it is not a great surprise to find Bernstein, Kautsky, Martov, and other revisionists getting a respectful write-up in these pages.

But this is to a large extent old hat. What we now want to know is whether Marxists have anything distinctive to say about what sort of socialism is still on the agenda. Few people think that a society that neglects the poor, the elderly, the sick, and the homeless is morally attractive; but even fewer think that it is about to be reformed by a revived Democratic Party, let alone overthrown by a renascent proletariat. Globally, it's more plausible to think that the price of peace in the twenty-first century will be a more equitable international distribution of prosperity, but even then the Gulf war surely showed that the disparity in military muscle between rich states and poor states is so gross that mere self-interest will not persuade the better off to do much for the poor.

If there is to be a revival of interest not in the socialist project but in simple social justice, and some confidence that federal and state governments can do something to bring it about, we very

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much need a new story about what's in it for the affluent and the powerful as well as for the victims. *After the Fall* contributes nothing to that task. For thirty years the *marxisant* left has prided itself on an understanding of the present and a view of the future deeper and clearer than the liberal one. Now we see that it was a hollow boast. Still, gloating is not appropriate, when what now unites liberals and social democrats is a terrible feeling of impotence.

ALAN RYAN is a Mellon Foundation Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, where he is writing a study of the social and political philosophy of John Dewey.

The Rule of Disorder

BY TONY ROTHMAN

Chance and Chaos by David Ruelle

(Princeton University Press, 195 pp., $24.95)

For those who maintain a studied indifference to science, or listen to NPR instead of the BBC, or as a matter of principle shun *The New York Times* best-seller list, it may conceivably come as news that the last fifteen years have witnessed the birth of a new scientific industry. With the rapid pace of contemporary science, the new discipline has not only been born, but has already passed into middle age. And to the delight of adepts and aficionados, a stream of buzzwords has followed along its steep trajectory: chaos, fractals, deterministic chaos, strange attractors, fractional dimension, Mandelbrot set. I am referring, of course, to the theory of chaos.

Despite the jargon, the advertising of breakthroughs in high-priced magazines, and repeated references to paradigm shifts (all generally unambiguous indicators that the science-to-salesmanship ratio approaches zero), the theory of chaos represents a genuine conceptual advance. This is the realization that relatively simple physical systems can behave in absolutely unpredictable fashions. To appreciate why the discovery came as such a shock to physicists, one must go back 300 years to the invention of mechanics by Isaac Newton.

Mechanics is the branch of physics that describes the motion of every object in the universe. It idealizes atoms, planets, and automobiles as large or small billiard balls, which move in accordance with Newton's laws. The important feature of Newton's laws—more precisely, of the equations that express Newton's laws—is that if you specify the positions and the velocities of all the particles in a system at a given time, then in principle you can compute exactly what the positions and velocities of each particle will be a second later, a decade later, a billion years later. A large computer and a larger amount of time might be necessary to carry out the task, but in principle it can be done.

The inscribing of initial positions and velocities is a sacred act in physics, and therefore receives its own term: the specification of initial conditions. Once initial conditions are fixed, the future behavior of the system is frozen. Newtonian mechanics is precisely deterministic. Thus a golf ball's initial position and velocity in the Earth's gravitational field determine its path. A tacit assumption made by physicists over the centuries was that if the initial velocity of the ball were altered just a little, the trajectory would remain almost the same. (Perhaps the golf ball would not rise quite as high.) And so in physicists' minds, determinism became synonymous with predictability.

The science of chaos has shown us that synonyms can be antonyms. The first hints were discovered in the early 1960s by Edward Lorenz, a meteorologist at MIT, who made a simplified mathematical model of certain aspects of atmospheric circulation. Lorenz's model consisted of three meager equations. They were unquestionably deterministic. At first glance they would arouse as much curiosity as another Mozart edition. A physicist looking at them would scoff: "I can solve those—probably." But the prudence of that last-minute hesitation would be well justified. For all their evident simplicity, Lorenz's equations had a peculiar property: if the initial conditions were changed in the slightest degree—in the tenth decimal place or the 1,000th—the system would rapidly diverge from its previous path until the new trajectory bore no resemblance to the old whatsoever. (I am using trajectory here in the same way one would refer to "the trajectory of the economy," to refer not necessarily to a path in physical space but to an abstract course taken by the variables of the system.)

For Lorenz, the result suggested that long-term weather forecasting would be forever relegated to the domain of fantasy. Even the flapping of a butterfly's wings could eventually change the entire evolution of the atmosphere. The future remained determined by the present, but it had become uncomputable. Lorenz's discovery lay eclipsed for a decade in the pages of the *Journal of Atmospheric Sciences* until other researchers began to stumble on systems that behave in the same apparently random fashion. Like Lorenz, these investigators found that randomness is not without form. For some initial conditions the systems were predictable, as Newton would have it. For other initial conditions they were not.

But even when a system behaved unpredictably, it nevertheless displayed some order. When graphed in a certain manner, the trajectory would take off toward the west, loop around once or twice, dart off toward the east, loop around again, head back west, and so on. The number of loops on each leg of the trip was completely erratic, and no orbit ever exactly followed a previous one, but the general pattern was always reproducible. These striking figures, most resembling a pair of moth wings, were the famous "strange attractors": "attractor," because all trajectories converge to this set of paths, and "strange," because the paths were random.

In fact, they were fractal. A fractal is a pattern—you may well have had one on a Christmas card—that appears basically the same at any scale. As you observe it under a microscope, all the while increasing the magnification, the pattern seems to repeat itself ad infinitum. Yet in all but the simplest fractals, the pattern has a certain degree of randomness built into it, and you cannot predict exactly what it is going to do next.

Chaos, the term now universally used to describe the behavior of Lorenzian systems, may be a poor choice of words. "Chaos" suggests randomness or chance behavior in the sense of probability and statistics: the outcome of a certain card game is a chance event, the heights of men and women are distributed ran-

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domly throughout the population, and so on. "Deterministic chaos" is a somewhat better description of Lorenz's discovery. For there is, to repeat, no chance involved, but the system is behaving in a way so complicated that it might as well be random. Indeed, some scientists would maintain that the "random" outcome of a coin toss or a game of roulette is the result of deterministic chaos, but the connection has not been rigorously established. (Given that the future of chaotic systems is by definition unpredictable, the connection may be impossible to establish. In principle.)

By whatever name, however, chaotic systems are evidently common in nature. To judge from the pages of scientific journals over the past decade, they are not merely common but inevitable. The orbits of comets are chaotic. The orbit of Pluto is chaotic. The gyrations of the Chinese toy acrobat on my desk are chaotic. The beating of a fibrillating heart is chaotic, chemical mixing is chaotic, the economy is chaotic ... fractals are everywhere.

David Ruelle is well placed to survey the fractionalized landscape of chaos. An eminent mathematical physicist, he may have coined the term "strange attractor." (He does not seem to remember.) More certain is his discovery, with Floris Takens, that chaos theory is necessary to describe turbulence in fluids. The expository passages of his book cover what is by now well-trod territory, but Ruelle sets out the basics with precision, concision, and humor. And there is the occasional surprise. For those who find it improbable that the flapping of a butterfly's wings could alter the course of the atmosphere, consider the frequent collision of air molecules in a room. Now imagine that God removes a single electron from the edge of the known universe. The gravitational force acting on the air molecules will now be ever so slightly (unimaginably, really) less. Still, after only about fifty collisions, two molecules that would have collided in the presence of the distant electron will now miss each other—and thus after only a fraction of a second their trajectories will become entirely different from what they otherwise would have been. (I was so startled at this result that I made my own estimate, and got an even lower figure.)

Nevertheless, physics and eminence are not the main reasons to take up *Chance and Chaos*. Some books are to be read to master a subject. Some books are read to get a complete overview of a subject. Still other books, perhaps the best books, are to be read for the pleasure of the author's company. Ruelle's book falls into the last category. It is not a treatise so much as a series of essays that wanders in and about the subjects of chance and chaos. Indeed, while reading this somewhat random walk, one wishes one were strolling with Ruelle along the Champs-Élysées, engaged in an infinite discussion of chance, chaos, economics, intelligence, music, free will, sex, the business of science, scientists themselves ... all things about which Ruelle does not hesitate to express his opinion. Here he is on the inevitable subject of free will:

> My own views on free will tie in with the problem of computability.... To bring the question into focus, I like to think of the paradox of someone (the *predictor*) who uses the determinism of physical laws to foresee the future, then uses free will to contradict the predictions. The paradox is especially pressing in science fiction stories in which there are predictors capable of making incredibly precise forecasts. (Think of Frank Herbert's *Dune* and Isaac Asimov's *Foundation*.) How do we handle this paradox? We could abandon determinism or free will, but there is a third possibility: we may question the ability of any predictor to do the job so well that a paradox arises.

This passage may serve to contrast Ruelle's book with James Gleick's best-selling account of chaos theory. The latter is the journalist's account par excellence. The story is swiftly and dramatically told; Gleick conveys a good sense of how scientific discoveries are made. But conforming to the conventions of American journalism, his focus is as much on the scientists as on the science, and virtually all his thoughts are buttressed by quotations or paraphrases of his sources. It is written from the outside. Ruelle, on the other hand, writes as a man more concerned with science than personalities and as a man in possession of his own thoughts. He writes from the inside. And familiarity breeds contempt.

Is that too harsh? Perhaps, but Ruelle's experiences have clearly given him a justifiably jaundiced view of the scientific establishment. Scientific fashions are quick to activate his spleen:

> Fashions currently play an essential role in the sociology—and in the funding of physics and other sciences.... A specialized subject (such as chaos, string theory, or high-temperature superconductors) comes into fashion for a few years, and then is dumped. In the meantime the field has been invaded by swarms of people who are attracted by success, rather than by the ideas involved. And this changes the atmosphere for the worse.

Ruelle goes on to describe how several of his papers were mutilated or cut with razor blades from journals to prevent their use by researchers. He concludes that such vandalism is "characteristic of a new situation in which the main problem is no longer to convince other scientists that your controversial ideas represent physical reality, but to get ahead of the competition using whatever means are available."

Whether this sort of behavior is of recent origin is highly debatable, but Ruelle's remarks have a ring of truth in an age when funding is short, the scientific community is large, and important ideas are few. (Still, I would take science any day over the atmosphere in the average symphony orchestra.) The outcome of the competition combined with large numbers of competitors is predictable:

> The physics of chaos ... in spite of frequent triumphant announcements of "novel" breakthroughs, has had a declining output of interesting discoveries. Hopefully, when the craze is over, a sober appraisal of the difficulties of the subject will result in a new wave of high-quality results.

Such ruminations culminate in a passage so hilarious and sardonic that it is perhaps best read in context. The reader will have to imagine Ruelle's funeral oration for scientists who have died prematurely from the distressful condition

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known as "infectious enthusiasm."

In the spirit of Ruelle's lament, it is appropriate to ask whether chaos theory has turned out to be the all-encompassing revolution that Gleick has led his many readers to believe. The honest answer is that it is probably too early to tell. If you put the question to a scientist, the reply will undoubtedly depend on how many years that particular scientist has invested in chaos. For, just as Ruelle predicted, the bandwagon has rolled on. The days when every week saw a new seminar or colloquium on chaos are over, and results important enough to filter out to the larger scientific community are now scarce. This may indicate that the easy problems have been solved.

Fractals are everywhere; and regardless of who discovered the Mandelbrot set, Benoit Mandelbrot is famous. The partisans of fractals point out that fractal patterns are found in coastlines, tree branchings, blood vessels, goose down, ferns, economic trends ... well, everywhere. Extremists even claim that fractals are the geometry of nature. Yet apart from the adornment of coffee tables and a generation of Hollywood special effects (I suspect that the mountain in the new Paramount logo is fractal-generated), I cannot offhand think of many serious uses for them. Certainly mathematicians tend to dismiss fractals as too simple to command serious study.

It seems to me that partisans leave out several important points from these discussions. First, a fractal really is infinitely repeating, but a fern is quite finite, so the resemblance between fractal ferns and natural ferns is not exact. Moreover, fractals are generated on computers by simple algorithms: take a number, square it, add it to a constant; take the result, square it, add it to the same constant; and so on. Presumably nature does not operate this way, so it remains unclear why fractals should be so pervasive or how they evolve. I assume that the partisans would argue that deterministic chaos operating in nature results in fractals, but at the moment there is apparently no good theory to explain why things are as they are, or why they will be as they will be.

In short, the geometry of fractals may be understood, but their dynamics are not. And the question of dynamics surfaces in attempts to apply chaos to the economy. The economy is a complex system, the equations governing it are likely linked in the same way as the equations of chaotic systems, and so it is not farfetched to think the economy might behave chaotically. But there are numerous differences between the economy and traditional chaotic systems. Chaos theory deals with systems that under Newtonian conditions would be periodic, such as my toy acrobat who attempts to swing around the horizontal bar over and over again. As Ruelle points out, most economic trends take place against a general background of growth, so this analogy, too, is not exact. And economists (obviously) do not understand the dynamics of the economy. Apart from all the intrinsic complexities, it is difficult to model a system that is so susceptible to psychological influences and external shocks.

Even if chaos theory does have some bearing on the economy, its message will not be one of comfort and joy. Following Ruelle, let us imagine two countries, the first ideally suited to manufacture cheap toothpaste and the second ideally suited to manufacture cheap toothbrushes. Conventional economic theory tells us that free trade between the two countries will be beneficial to both. But the theory of chaos tells us that linking local economies with those of other countries "may produce wild economic oscillations that will damage the toothbrush and toothpaste industry. And thus be responsible for countless cavities." As Ruelle concludes, "Legislators and government officials are [thus] faced with the possibility that their decisions, intended to produce a better equilibrium, will in fact lead to wild and unpredictable fluctuations, with possibly quite disastrous effects." A message for our time.

The metaphorical aspects of chaos are obviously seductive, but extensions of the theory to every sphere of human activity should be approached with caution. Ruelle himself, in some of his scientific papers, has disproved certain claims made for chaos in the areas of finance, electroencephalography, and meteorology. Efforts to explain the second law of thermodynamics (the increase of entropy) by chaos seem to me on the right track, but the issue is unresolved, and my view is anathema to many physicists. The application of chaos to psychology is, to put it mildly, premature.

Continuing to follow Ruelle's somewhat stochastic trajectory, it is perhaps appropriate to meditate for a few moments on the metaphor of scientific discovery. Certain concepts, the second law of thermodynamics first among them and the Heisenberg uncertainty principle close behind, tend to be taken over by the public as grand metaphors for existence. The theory of chaos falls obviously into this class.

Scientific laws do have universal validity, but they are formulated under precisely defined assumptions. It is those assumptions that tend to get lost in the transmission from the scientific sphere to the non-scientific sphere. The second law says that entropy increases in an isolated system. An isolated system is something that has one and only one meaning in physics: it is a system that exchanges neither energy nor material with the outside world. Energy is a quantity, and it too has a precise physical definition: the amount of work done by a force over a given distance. Work also has a definition, and so on.

Ignoring such fine points leads, say, to Jeremy Rifkin's ludicrous *Entropy*, which applies the second law to physics, religion, love, and all intermediate spectral frequencies. It leads to book titles such as *Evolution as Entropy*, which equates a process to a quantity. It leads to Eric Lerner's *The Big Bang Never Happened*, which rivals Rifkin in its attempt to make a pet physical theory compatible with New Age thinking. It leads, after an unsuccessful visit to an acupuncturist, to motherly advice: "Tell the practitioner to reverse the energy flow."

My response to such people is the generic response of physicists. I scratch my head, pout, squint, and finally admit that the meaning of what has been said escapes me. They remind me, in turn, that great scientists make connections that others fail to see, and that ordinary physicists are merely afflicted with tunnel vision, blind to the larger picture. Having witnessed a number of great scientists in action, however, I must insist that there is a complementary talent that non-scientists forget: great scientists instinctively know what connections *not* to see. They know the limits of definitions, the separability of issues.

Chaos is dangerous territory for those inclined to sweeping generalizations. By showing that the future is not computable, it has added to the arsenal of laws (such as the Heisenberg uncertainty principle and Godel's theorem) that define the limits of knowledge. Such statements are among the most powerful in science. But each of these is a precise, not an uncertain, proposition. Before applying chaos to literature, religion, art, astrology, and harmonic convergence, one should learn the foundations of the theory, and on what patch of ground those foundations stand. And as a first step, one could do far worse than pick up Ruelle.

TONY ROTHMAN is the author most recently of *A Physicist on Madison Avenue* (Princeton University Press).

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Art and Circuses

BY E. V. THAW

The Museum Transformed: Design and Culture in the Post-Pompidou Age by Douglas Davis

(Abbeville Press, 240 pp., $55)

To discuss the architecture of art museums is to raise fundamental questions about the role of art and of museums in contemporary culture. What kind of art do we like? Do we like art at all? What do we want a museum building to be? Why do we need another one, given how many we have? Who uses them, and for what purpose? All serious questions; but the answers they provoke are often surprising. There is by now a very complicated relationship between what we call art and the museums that are supposed to display it.

Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum, completed in 1960, opened a rift between the architecture of museums and the sympathetic exhibition of art. I. M. Pei's elegant East Building of the National Gallery in Washington, which opened to the public in 1978, continued the tradition, as did, in a very different, vulgar, and self-dramatizing way, Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers's Pompidou Center in Paris, opened in 1977. All of these buildings have dramatic and popular public spaces. All are designed to keep people moving, usually in one direction. All are thus antithetical to contemplation—and all are visited by huge crowds that may be more interested in the experience of the buildings than in their contents.

This tradition is the focus of Douglas Davis's curious and confused book. Acknowledging that the new breed of museum is "assailed by traditionalists, most of all by curators, collectors, and artists, for their insensitivity to what is regarded as the central purpose of these buildings," Davis takes a more populist, postmodern pose. He makes it his mission to defend these buildings, which have proved so immensely popular with a vast new public, an audience that would have been inconceivable to earlier museum builders. He contrasts the so-called post-Pompidou museum with the traditional art museum conceived and built to be a temple of art. Older art museums mostly derive, according to Davis, from the Neo-Classical designs and theories of Karl Friedrich Schinkel, who created the great Altes Museum in Berlin in 1830. Schinkel set his museum on a podium, with its interior arranged in a rational series of galleries, one opening into another, around a central court.

As Davis's subtitle, "Design and Culture in the Post-Pompidou Age," suggests, the real subject of his book is the state of culture generally: how our postmodern, poststructuralist, multicultural climate influences the architecture, the management, and the educational mission of these Alice-in-Wonderland institutions called art museums. The museum as "treasure house" wrapped in "royalist architecture" and primarily concerned with "sanctified masterpieces" is how Davis conceives of the great age of museums—a past now happily superseded, thanks to the very success of museums in becoming centerpieces of our cultural lives. In the absence of great train stations and majestic courthouse steps, they now vie with shopping malls as the "agoras" of our communities. The purpose of these new museums is to provide civic symbols, and above all spaces in which to gather, to eat, to shop, to hear music, to witness performances; ramps to wander up and down; escalators to ride; and gardens to sit in. Works of art, if any might be within sight, are a bonus.

Just how eager Davis is to flee from the new museum's possible contamination by original art objects, "sanctified" or not, is clear in his vision of the ideal art museum of the near future:

> Now we have the means to "move" any treasure in a matter of seconds from the vault of the Louvre to a terminal in Columbus, Ohio, before a viewer conditioned by now to intuit the lost "aura" of a work of art in its duplicate state.
>
> The architect who is aware of this post-contemporary condition—and of the museum's evolving role—is trapped in a fatal contradiction. He must somehow reconcile this truth with the demands of an institution generally committed to posing as the cathedral of the irreplaceable object.

Reconcile what truth? Davis implicitly invokes the old nostrum, associated with

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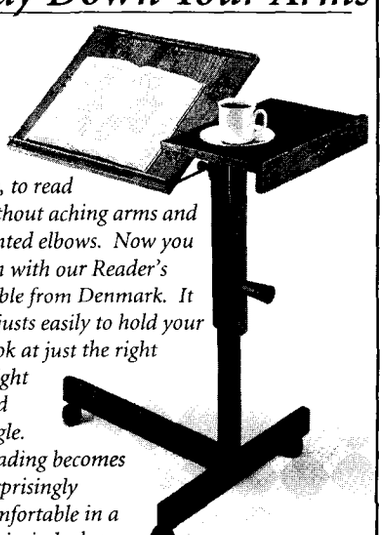

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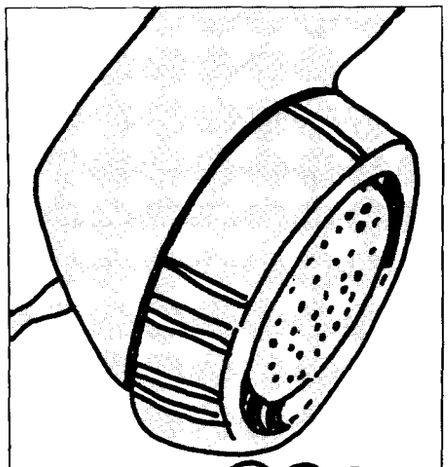

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Walter Benjamin, about mechanical reproduction replacing originals. But even in Benjamin's treatment of it in 1936, the notion has been a false prophecy widely misunderstood but taken up by the enemies of art. In any case, he certainly didn't mean the miserable product that now emerges from computer terminals, television sets, other electronic media, and that much overrated technique called holography, all of which Davis cites as part of his new "anti-museum."

All buildings by architects are commissioned by clients (or patrons, as they used to be called). A building is successful, if not necessarily beautiful, if it fulfills the purpose set forth by the client. When Atlanta's establishment asked Richard Meier to build a new High Museum of Art, the city had no collection worth talking about, so Meier clearly stated his intention to make the building the star. The strategy worked, and the Atlanta Art Museum is now widely publicized in the manner of the Sydney Opera House, with rarely a mention of the art inside. In a repeat performance on a much greater scale, Meier has designed a Kafkaesque complex of structures on a mountaintop in Los Angeles, an edifice that is likely to distract the visiting public from noticing that the Getty Museum does not, for all its money, possess as much worth exhibiting as it should.

A few miles away, in Pasadena, the Norton Simon Museum is housed in a building of no particular distinction. It attracts only a modest attendance. Yet it offers to the few who bother to make the effort a dazzling experience of great works of art. Simon closed the auditorium, and his museum does not allow a restaurant or even a tearoom. The shop offers only excellent books and printed reproductions—no fake statuary, ties, glassware. The museum does not display the sumptuous period rooms and decorative arts of a former residence like New York's Frick Collection, but by the standards of aesthetic quality the two museums are on a par.

Fort Worth's Kimbell Art Museum is the third museum in the country that aspires to offer something like the visual epiphanies of the Norton Simon and the Frick. The Kimbell's first director, the late Richard F. Brown, earlier presided over the construction of the disastrous Los Angeles County Museum, a project poisoned by a squabbling board of corporate types who ended up with a building complex more suitable for a company headquarters than an art museum. Seasoned by fire, he hired the reclusive Philadelphia architect Louis Kahn and gave him a clear and precise mandate for what the Kimbell building was, in theory, supposed to be.

The two of them discussed at great length the concept of a small collection of great works of art from different cultures living together harmoniously, establishing relationships among themselves for the viewer by virtue of their presentation, their proximity, and their common aesthetic quality. It is worth quoting a crucial paragraph in Brown's thoughtful "Pre-Architectural Program," which he prepared for his board and for Kahn.

> Even though, hopefully, the building will be a creative contribution to the history of the art of architecture, the building itself should play a supporting role to the reasons for its existence, not a dominating role. Architectural "gymnastics" for their own sake work against these reasons. As in verbal expression, when an alternative is presented between the use of a long complicated word and a short simple one, the latter is invariably the better choice. The overwhelming percentage of people whom this building is intended to serve will not be art historians, other architects, or progressive artists with a sophisticated background in architectural form. Their total experience of a visit to the museum should be one of warmth, mellowness, and even elegance. Among other experiences educational and personally enriching, a visitor to an art museum ought to be charmed; otherwise, why should we expect him to come? The spaces, forms, and textures should maintain a harmonious simplicity and human proportion between the visitor and the building and the art object observed.

Needless to say, this passage is not to be found in *The Museum Transformed*, although it ought to be enlarged and mounted on the wall above the author's desk, and above the drafting tables of most of the architects whose work he seems to admire. Davis grants grudging approval to the Kimbell as well as to Kahn's Mellon Center for British Art in New Haven, acknowledging that they are "seminal," but he insists that they "do not tell the whole story." He joins in the widespread dismissal of Gae Aulenti's revisionist presentation of nearly the whole of nineteenth-century French art in the former Gare d'Orsay, but he thoroughly dislikes what nearly all art lovers have applauded, the Picasso Museum housed in a renovated great mansion in the Marais in Paris—perhaps because it has real rooms and so few postmodern clichés.

Davis devotes only a single illustration (of a lobby area with no art) and not a single mention anywhere in the text to another notable achievement in recent museum architecture, Moshe Safdie's new National Gallery of Canada in

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Ottawa. Arata Isozaki, James Sterling, and Richard Meier get the most attention, after Renzo Piano and his Pompidou. In addition to other Japanese architects, Davis also discusses at length, with accompanying illustrations, various German architects and their buildings. (A recent newspaper article catalogs ninety-five museums built in West Germany in the last fifteen years.) For Davis some of these buildings are "amusing," "witty," "playful," and make jokes, even at the expense of the client (in one case, a lingerie manufacturer). The architect as comedian: now there is a conceptual advance.

In the battle between classical museum design, with space divided into discrete rooms or galleries for the permanent or semi-permanent installation of artworks, and the modernist predilection for free flowing open space broken only by the needs of temporary display, Davis sides with the latter. He rejects also the maze-like sequential flow of small spaces made famous by Alfred Barr and William Rubin at MOMA, although that stark arrangement for the museum's permanent collection has everything to do with correct scale for its modern paintings and nothing at all to do with architectural posturing. (Hung high, as they are in the high-ceilinged galleries of the Metropolitan Museum, even eighteen-foot Pollocks look like postage stamps.)

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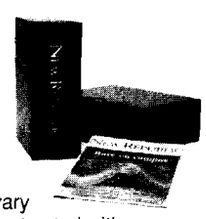

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Davis is certainly right that open space divided only by movable temporary partitions fits more comfortably with what is actually happening in most museums today. The rooms or spaces that house a permanent collection, if there is one, are often the quietest part of the building. It is usually the current, temporary exhibition—often the "blockbuster" requiring lines and tickets—to which the public is drawn. The constant surveys of attendance figures and the endlessly circulating traveling exhibitions have transformed museum-going into something very like a spectator sport, with success determined by the box office.

In European cities there used to be a clear distinction between two entities with different functions, the "Kunsthaus" or art museum containing a collection, and the "Kunsthalle" or space for loan exhibitions of all kinds, including contemporary art. In the United States both activities have generally come together within the same institutions, except that, in large centers such as New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago, there are now museums that exist solely to show contemporary work, while the great collecting institutions also continue to do so.

Collectors in Los Angeles, London, and New York who have bought more contemporary art than they can hang in their various houses ask architects to recondition empty factory buildings (of which there are plenty) and voilà, a new art museum: the Saatchi Collection, the Dia Foundation, and so on. Since much of the art in these private, "boutique" museums is huge in scale, established museums do not have space to show much of it at a time. The apotheosis of this factory space idea for acres of nearly blank canvas and industrially fabricated sculpture is the proposal for a complex in North Adams, Massachusetts, intended to become a branch of New York's Guggenheim Museum. It is to house the vast minimalist collection of Count Panza, and its construction is to be paid for by the sale of three masterworks from the museum's hidden permanent collection.

Inevitably, expansions such as Gwathmey, Siegel Associates' extension of the Guggenheim provoke intense controversy, as Davis recounts. In this case, a less disfiguring design was eventually chosen, but many observers were still unhappy. (The rebuilding, curiously, is to make room to show the wonderful Guggenheim "permanent" collection, although the museum has for years been selling it off.) Michael Graves's several designs for a huge expansion of the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York did not produce a solution that made the Whitney's constituency happy, and the project has now been canceled completely. I suspect the true reason nothing will be built is that the Whitney has lost its way and doesn't know what it really wants. Not mentioned in Davis's account of renovations is the narrow escape from tragedy for the Kimbell when its director, Edmund Pillsbury, wisely shelved the proposals to double the size of Kahn's almost perfect building. Even the wealthy and self-confident Kimbell nearly succumbed to the need for larger spaces, not for more art (great objects come along only slowly), but for more programs and more exhibitions.

The lack of consensus or clarity about which of the myriad of strange objects now exhibited will be of lasting cultural value has a corollary in the lack of clarity about which of the many strange buildings built to house these objects are likely to prove of lasting value. For the chief raison d'être for the overwhelming majority of the new constructions is contemporary art. Since the end of abstract expressionism, the path of art has not been guided by any central trends, but has wandered all over the place, sometimes resulting in works of giant scale or made of non-traditional, often impermanent materials. Galleries like Frank Gehry's Temporary Contemporary or Max Gordon's 98A Boundary Road for the Saatchi Collection, which are in effect cleaned-up temporary spaces, are fitting and appropriate for this new art. The trouble begins when established, permanent public art museums usurp the role of the Soho art dealer or the adventurous private collector and certify the historical and educational value of art that has not yet been subjected to real critical discrimination.

It is too easy, however, to indict celebrity architects who distract attention with the kind of stylistic "gymnastics" that Brown exhorted Kahn not to use. There is an alternative to Davis's vision of the current and future museum, and it is, ironically, one of the two architects of the Pompidou Center, the talismanic symbol of Davis's new era, who suggests the way. In his recent De Menil Museum in Houston, Renzo Piano worked without Richard Rogers and forgot his vocabulary of visible pipes, beams, and ducts, and he succeeded in creating an art-friendly, serene, minor masterpiece. Working for a client with a superb art collection and a vision of what she wanted, Piano overcame all trendiness and posturing. Clearly today's architectural tower of Babel is not entirely the architects' fault. Someone hires them and tells them what to build. I think we may well be getting the product we deserve. •

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Boy toys

I'VE DISCOVERED I CAN CARRY A gun between my breasts. The Concealed Midriff Holster is "ideal for small and medium frame guns," fits snugly below a bra, and comes in beige with lace trim. I learned this from a recent issue of the revamped *Women & Guns* magazine. Published by the pro-gun Second Amendment Foundation, *W&G* is full of special accessories and advice for the discriminating heat-packing shopper: "fashion design" pocketbooks that coyly conceal a side opening; clip-on holsters ("one good solution to the no-belt problem"); and articles on such topics as target-shooting etiquette ("The wise shooter is muzzle conscious"). For nearly three years this potpourri of useful information was available only by subscription. But now it can be found nuzzling up to the more male-oriented *Shotgun News* and *Combat Handguns* at your local newsstand or gun shop. The magazine is trying to appeal to the 15.6 million American women who, according to a 1988 Gallup Poll commissioned by Smith & Wesson, own a rifle, shotgun, or handgun. Written and edited by women, *Women & Guns* offers a decidedly feminist rationale for gun ownership: "Making the decision to own a gun is perhaps the ultimate proof that a woman has succeeded in weakening the bonds of traditional female conditioning"; gun control, therefore, "is, *de facto*, an insidious form of discrimination." Although guns are often displayed on floral prints or draped with a strand of pearls, the women featured are tough, no-nonsense Thelmas and Louises. Nearly half the magazine's readers say they carry a gun all the time. So much for the unique effects of testosterone.

FEMINIST CODE WORDS HAVE BEEN part of the marketing strategies of gun manufacturers since they began to aim special "lady" products at women in the mid-1980s to compensate for a slump in sales from saturation of their primary market: white males. Smith & Wesson has its elegant LadySmith line, but New Detonics' Royal Escort (purple with a gold-plated trigger and hammer) and Lorcin's Lady Lorcin (in "designer Pearl Pink & Chrome finish") are also in vogue. All this women's lib stuff, though, can't obscure the gun lobby's real agenda—exploiting women's fears of rape. And it's this rhetoric, ironically, that's most in sync with today's feminists. In a pamphlet titled "It Can Happen to You," the NRA writes: "There is no way of telling a criminal predator by the way he looks. . . . He might be a potential suitor. He might work in a nearby office." The anti-date rape crowd couldn't have said it any better.

BUT NO MATTER HOW IT'S FRAMED, this isn't a feminist issue. It's a gun issue. And numerous studies have effectively destroyed the idea that a handgun is useful for self-defense. According to the Violence Policy Center, any handgun is 118 times more likely to be used in a suicide, fatal accident, or murder than to kill a criminal. Pro-gunners claim that just the act of brandishing a gun scares away criminals. What they fail to mention is how rare it is for a gun owner actually to have his or her gun available during a crime—despite all the paraphernalia designed to encourage round-the-clock toting. And if you want to know the real attitude toward gun-brandishing women among the NRA set, don't look at *Women & Guns*. Check out the 1992 calendar put out by Intratec, which also makes the popular Tec-9 and .22 Scorpion. Each month features a different shot of a seductively pouting model, in a bikini or less, grasping an Intratec piece. All seem abundantly empowered.

HUNG IN SOMEONE'S OFFICE, THIS calendar would probably constitute sexual harassment: a sexual harasser no longer has to be live. A reproduction of Goya's *Naked Maja* was recently removed from a Penn State classroom because an English professor claimed it was sexually harassing her and her female students. (Further evidence of the alliance between radical feminists and right-wingers: Irving Kristol commended the decision in *The Wall Street Journal* as "perfectly justifiable.") It's not exactly news that "sexual harassment," in its short life span, has broadened beyond recognition, trivializing itself in the process. Also trivialized have been the accuser's burdens and responsibilities. But now we have another very public case that looks refreshingly straightforward. If the accusations against Senator Brock Adams of Washington are to be believed (and they seem completely credible), his behavior clearly fits even the most stringent definition of the term. Leaving aside the one charge of rape, Adams has been accused of bonding with females he works and associates with by massaging their buttocks and fondling their breasts, in several instances after spiking their drinks. If there were ever a case where the victims should feel they could confidently step forward and point the finger, this is it: his alleged behavior was non-consensual, sexual, physical, and odiously aggressive.

BUT THEY DIDN'T. THE MOST HIS accusers were prepared to do was to tell their stories anonymously to *The Seattle Times*. (They did agree to testify if Adams sues the *Times*.) Too bad. However unfairly, the legitimacy of the issue of sexual harassment ultimately rests on individual women taking risks and, often, subjecting themselves to further mortification. Women need to act as though they take the issue seriously enough, both personally and politically, to outweigh any professional or media repercussions. If Adams's eight accusers identified themselves, we'd be one step closer to an optimal precedent: a woman publicly charges (real) sexual harassment against a public official immediately after the incident; he is found guilty and steps down. In one of the more minor episodes in the Adams chronicle, a lobbyist says she sat next to him at a dinner only to find his hand soon exploring her upper thigh. This humiliation lasted about fifteen minutes; she never did anything about it. That was 1982. These days, of course, a woman in a similar circumstance, emboldened by Anita Hill and armed with the latest tome from Naomi Wolf, would immediately rush to take a stand. Not.

'BROCK'S PROBLEM,' AS IT WAS apparently known around the office, also provides a classic Washington irony: women's groups have found it difficult to call for his resignation, evidently because he's done so much good for women. (Tip to senatorial sexual harassers: annually fight for increased funding of breast cancer research.) This logic is just as screwy as the logic underlying the belief that Bill Clinton would be bad on "women's issues" because he's committed adultery. Even if Adams had single-handedly ended all discrimination against women, it wouldn't matter: he has (allegedly) sexually violated women, i.e., acted *against their will*. Adultery may say a lot about a candidate's respect for contracts (as well as respect for his wife), but—as a private, consensual matter—it shows little about his respect for women's rights.

KAREN LEHRMAN

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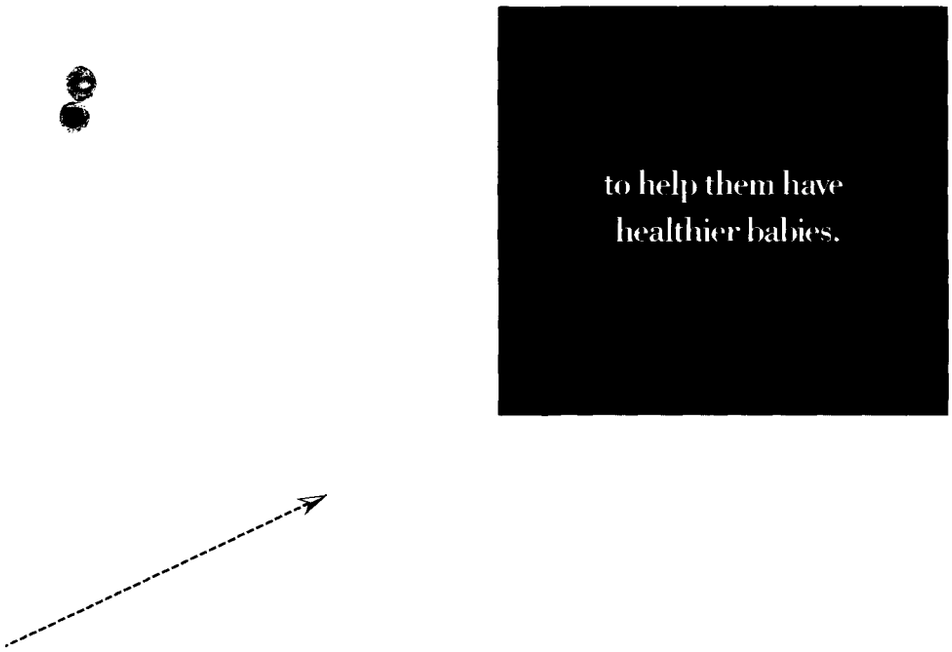

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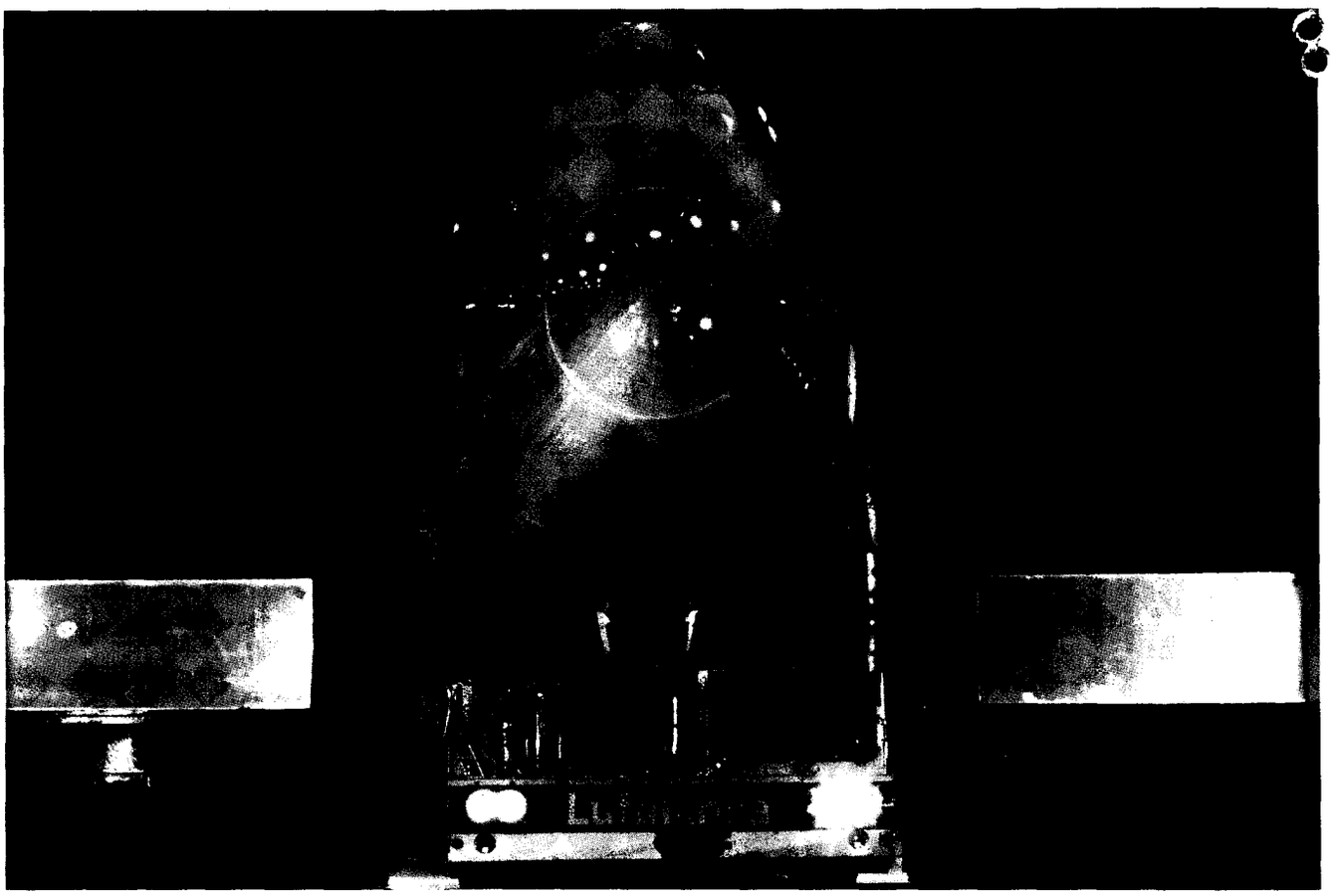

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